

ROCHESTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
ROCHESTER SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
October 1, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.
16 Pine Street
Rochester, MA 02770

Members Present: Sharon Hartley, Chairperson, Anne Fernandes, Vice-Chairperson, Robin Rounseville, Kate Duggan and Tina Rood.

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 Asst. to the Supt., Derek Medeiros, Principal, Rochester Memorial School, Charles West, Asst. Principal, Rochester Memorial School, teachers, parents and members of the press.

Meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m. by Chairperson Hartley. Ms. Hartley read the following statement which is also posted on the agenda:

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid format. School Committee and Administrators will have the option of meeting in person at Rochester Memorial School, 16 Pine Street, Rochester, MA 02770 or via zoom. Please note that public access is available through zoom ONLY through the link above.

Ms. Hartley welcomed everyone joining the school committee through zoom and also informed everyone that the following school committee members were present at Rochester Memorial School to take part in the meeting: Robin Rounseville, Tina Rood, Kate Duggan, Anne Fernandes, and herself, she also stated that Superintendent Michael Nelson was present and that all other administrators were joining them through zoom.

I. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of Minutes- Regular Session:

June 2, 2020 Minutes – The June 2nd minutes were held until the next meeting.

August 6, 2020 Minutes

MOTION: by Ms. Fernandes to approve the August 6th minutes as presented

SECOND: by Ms. Rounseville

Motion Approved Unanimously

September 3, 2020 Minutes

MOTION: by Ms. Fernandes to approve the September 3rd minutes as presented

SECOND: by Ms. Rounseville

Motion Approved Unanimously

IV. General

A. Reopening Update

Mr. Nelson expressed to the school committee that we are in the 3rd week of being back in school with the staff and students, Mr. Nelson expressed everything seems to be going well so far. Mr. Nelson expressed that administrators and staff continue to settle our students into their learning models whether it be remote learning or hybrid. Mr. Nelson expressed that our teachers and staff

continue to work extremely hard, he expressed we are very fortunate to have such dedicated staff. Mr. Nelson expressed that we are getting better each day at what we are doing both in the hybrid model as well as in the remote learning model. Mr. Nelson expressed that the staff is adapting well to each scenario, he expressed that overall we are confident and each day we are getting better and better at what we're doing and in turn the students are also feeling better and more comfortable to be back in the building as well in the remote learning classrooms. Mr. Nelson expressed that students and families have truly been amazing in terms of how patient and supportive they have been, and he expressed that the students have been resilient throughout this whole process, Mr. Nelson expressed he is impressed by their ability to adjust on the fly, their compliance and he expressed they are truly remarkable. Mr. Nelson thanked the health officials of the Town of Rochester, both the Public Health Agent and the Town nurse, he expressed he met with both of them and they have been very supportive since the start of this pandemic, he expressed that he has been meeting with them regularly, they answer his calls whenever he needs to speak with them. Mr. Nelson expressed that they remain supportive of our Hybrid Learning Model and they are encouraging us to remain vigilant, in terms of adhering social distancing practices as well as hygiene and face coverings. Mr. Nelson expressed that he has continued his conversation with them about metrics and data points that we should continue to use to try to identify to inform the administration, parents/guardians and ultimately the school committee who has to make the decision in terms of what learning model is the best fit for the school district. Mr. Nelson expressed that he believes it's important to keep looking at these data points. Mr. Nelson expressed he believes it's also important to report to school committee student enrollment and Mr. Medeiros will touch upon that in a few moments, Mr. Nelson reported home school numbers to the school committee. Mr. Nelson reported that last year Rochester had 9 home school students and this year we currently have 27 students being home schooled, therefore 18 new students, Mr. Nelson expressed that while it's not a huge number it's still significant in terms of how it could impact the funding moving forward. Mr. Nelson expressed that he would continue to update the school committee.

Ms. Fernandes asked Supt. Nelson about the home school process. Mr. Nelson explained that there is an application that the family must fill out as well as submit an educational plan for each student outlining the specifics outlined in the district policy and state guidelines. Mr. Nelson explained that once he has all the information he reviews the packet with other administrators and either approves it or asks for other/more information from the family so that the request can be approved.

Ms. Rounseville asked if assessments were also part of the process. Mr. Nelson explained that some cases parents use their own assessments, however if parents requested to any special education assessments we would work with the family to get those in place for that particular student.

Mr. Nelson reported that currently Rochester Memorial School has 417 students in the hybrid learning model and 64 in the remote learning model. Mr. Nelson asked Principal Medeiros to report on a more detailed by grade analysis at this time.

Mr. Medeiros reported the following:

Remote Cohorts: 64 students total

Project Grow: 2

Kindergarten & Grade 1: 11

Grade 2 & 3: 24

Grade 4 & 5: 23

Grade 6: 5

Hybrid Cohorts: 417 students total

COHORT A: students w/ Last Name A-K, and COHORT B: students w/ Last Name L-Z

	COHORT A/CLASS SIZE	COHORT B/CLASS SIZE
<u>Kindergarten:</u>	A) 8, 7, 6	B) 9, 10, 8
<u>Grade 1:</u>	A) 9, 10, 9	B) 8, 8, 9
<u>Grade 2:</u>	A) 9,10,11	B) 8, 8, 8
<u>Grade 3:</u>	A) 7, 6, 6, 7	B) 9, 11, 10, 9
<u>Grade 4:</u>	A) 9, 8, 10	B) 8, 8, 9
<u>Grade 5:</u>	A) 12, 11, 13	B) 11, 11, 11
<u>Grade 6:</u>	A) 11, 7, 10	B) 12, 11, 11

Mr. Medeiros expressed that the maintenance and custodial staff did an outstanding job with spacing the desks and setting up the classrooms, Mr. Medeiros also expressed that the teachers have been amazing job despite of having desks 6 feet apart, and making an environment that is conducive to learning, he expressed that the classroom community has done a nice job adapting to the new environment and he believes that's why they had such a successful opening. Mr. Medeiros expressed that the two big components at Rochester Memorial have been one, the students, they have been cooperative, responsible, they are excited to be here, they are leading the way, they brought in a huge sense of calm to all of us, they have done an amazing job. Mr. Medeiros also expressed that the teachers and staff have been doing a great job and are making students feel comfortable in their new learning environments. Mr. Medeiros spoke about how staff are working with students to show them new ways of interacting during recess, morning meeting, walking in the hallways, etc. while maintaining social distancing. Mr. Medeiros expressed that he's very proud of both the students and the staff.

Ms. Hartley asked about the pickup/dropoff and how that was going in the morning and in the afternoon. Mr. Medeiros expressed that the traffic pattern was changed in the back of the school, and he expressed that the parents/guardians & kids have been phenomenal, he expressed that they have staff out there helping to assist with opening doors and helping little ones with their back packs as they get out of the vehicles. Mr. Medeiros expressed that they are asking parents to actually stay in their vehicles and parents have been doing great, he asked that parents continue to be patient as they perfect this new protocol. Mr. Medeiros stated that usually by 3:08 or 3:09 we have all vehicles cleared, which has been great. Mr. Medeiros expressed that having the two drop-off areas was crucial and it has worked great for both safety and it has been more efficient. Mr. Medeiros also thanked the Rochester Police Department for their assistance, he explained that they were at the school the whole first week and into the second week helping with the new traffic pattern. Mr. Medeiros also expressed that the bus transportation is also going well that the bus drivers are very cooperative and friendly and kids are smiling getting off the buses, Mr. Medeiros thanked Mr. Barber for all his work behind the scenes, he expressed that Mr. Barber was able to get all the kids who were on waiting lists approved to ride a bus, he also thanks Cheryl Sweeney from Amaral Bus Company.

Mr. Nelson also thanked Ellen Murphy, the school nurse for all her efforts, in terms of her leadership, her expertise and professional approach. Ms. Murphy has been great working with students and staff, Mr. Nelson reported that currently Rochester Memorial School does not have any positive cases of COVID-19 in students or staff. Mr. Nelson expressed that any students who displayed symptoms have been tested and have come back negative. Mr. Nelson thanked Ms. Murphy again for her leadership in keeping the school safe.

Mr. Nelson also thanked Mr. Barber and Ms. Cunningham for the work they did on attracting new substitutes to our district. Mr. Nelson explained that the Joint School Committee increased the substitute rates at their meeting on September 24th for the current school year, Mr. Nelson expressed that they have already increased their substitute pool for nurses and teachers and are working to get more.

Ms. Rood asked administration to report on the difference between a ½ day hybrid out Monday as opposed to a full day hybrid out Monday, she asked them to give her a usual schedule for each of the days. Mr. Medeiros reported that as described in the reopening plan presented in August, the hybrid out Monday as being as similar to the school schedule as possible, he reported that during these Mondays, teachers have outlines times for morning meetings, times for asynchronous and synchronous opportunities, as well as closing circle at the end of the day, Mr. Medeiros also stated that all specialists also check in with our students on Mondays, Mr. Medeiros thanked Ms. Karen Della Cioppa for her work in helping him and Mr. West with the specialist schedule, Mr. Medeiros expressed Ms. Della Cioppa has that creative mind, Mr. Medeiros expressed that they tried to mimic the day from 8:40 to 3:00 but in the virtual platform, Mr. Medeiros expressed that the ½ day was exactly the same schedule except everything was cut down to a half day schedule and having the day for the students ending at 12:20, he expressed that teachers were then given time for lunch, and then the staff went off to their professional development opportunities from 1 pm to 3 pm. Mr. Medeiros expressed that Dr. Pearson-Campbell would speak about some of those offerings later in the meeting. Ms. Rood also asked about how specialists are doing with having to move around instead of the students coming to them. Mr. Medeiros expressed that everyone has been great very flexible, he expressed that most of them travel with their carts in hand, he expressed that Mr. Woodward, the physical education teacher typically, weather permitting conducts his classes outside. Mr. Medeiros expressed that Ms. Audette and Ms. Williamson have also done some classes outside. Mr. Medeiros expressed that the specialists have used a combination of outdoor space and traveling to the classrooms and also checking in with the hybrid out students. Ms. Rood expressed that the more she hears about and reads about what's happening in the schools the more she's so proud of the work being done, she expressed that so much thoughtfulness has gone into planning every detail. She expressed she's very appreciative of all the efforts. Mr. Nelson expressed that those initial 10 days were crucial to make all these details work, and he's thankful to the school committee for approving those. Ms. Hartley expressed that is great to see everyone collaborating, so that our students have the very best learning environment.

B. Approval of Donation

Mr. Nelson expressed that we had the following donations to be accepted by school committee:

- Rochester Lions: Single subject notebooks, student scissors, wooden rulers, pens, filler paper and pencil cases.
- Kelley Medeiros: Bulk Box of Tissues

Mr. Nelson thanked the Rochester Lions Club and Ms. Kelley Medeiros for their donations.

Motion to approve the donation from the Rochester Lions as presented
MOTION by Ms. Fernandes
MOTION Seconded by Ms. Rounseville
Motion passed unanimously

Motion to approve the donation from the Ms. Kelley Medeiros
MOTION by Ms. Rounseville
MOTION Seconded by Ms. Rood
Motion passed unanimously

Ms. Hartley thanked both the Rochester Lions Club and Ms. Medeiros for their generous donations.

C. Student Handbook Revision Approval

Mr. Nelson explained that the student handbook had been published but that at this time we would like to present an addendum with changes for the 2020-2021 school year, Mr. Nelson expressed that

the revisions have to some protocols and changes from the reopening plan, Mr. Nelson also stated part of this addendum includes a Remote Learning Manual which was created by the six schools.

Mr. Medeiros reviewed the following additions to the student handbook:

- Addition of the Anti-Racism Resolution
- Transportation Expectations
- Remote Learning Manual
- Arrival/Departure, Pickup and Drop-off
- Attendance (hybrid/full remote)
- Food Service Breakfast/Lunch Protocols
- School Safety & School Visits
- Mask/Face covering Policy
- Health Information
- Responsive Classroom Approach

Mr. Medeiros expressed that the student handbook is on the Rochester Memorial School website.

Motion to approve the Student Handbook Revision as an Addendum as presented.

MOTION by Ms. Fernandes

MOTION Seconded by Ms. Rounseville

Motion passed unanimously

V. New Business

C. Business

1. Financial

Mr. Nelson asked Asst. Superintendent Barber to give an update on the FY21 Financials to date and also to give a report on food service and facilities. Mr. Barber reported that as of September 30, 2020 the Rochester Memorial School currently has \$939,744 available of the general funds appropriated in the 2021 Fiscal Year. Per the attached Year to Date Budget Report by Department, we are able to identify how our funds are currently encumbered and expended. This report recognizes that of the \$6,309,641 appropriated to the District, 90.622% is directly assigned and is spent/ encumbered to student instruction. Mr. Barber explained that some staff lines are in the red due to entitlement grants such as Title I, II, IDEA which have staff assignments and have not yet been applied.

Mr. Barber also gave a department summary overview on food service, facilities, technology, transportation and human resources.

Food Service: Mr. Barber explained that remote learning students are able to pick up their 5 meals every Monday afternoon, as well as students who are on the hybrid plan. Mr. Barber reported that he will be looking at evaluating for potential changes or updates or possible modifications that need to be made. He expressed that the goal is to get as many meals out as possible, however it's hard when you only have 50-60% of the students in the building. Mr. Barber expressed that there has been a lot of positive feedback regarding the food service program.

Technology: Mr. Barber expressed that the distribution of chromebooks for both hybrid students and students on the remote learning model have been going great, Mr. Barber expressing he's hoping to have the iPad during the month of October for Kindergartens and 1st graders, Mr. Barber expressed that he doesn't have a specific date but that he will have an update at the next meeting.

Facilities: Mr. Barber reported that Mr. Jones has been doing phenomenal work, adhering to COVID-19 protocols for HVAC, cleaning and sanitization, he expressed that the ground mosquito spraying was completed, as well as the PPE distribution.

Transportation: Mr. Barber expressed that currently all students who requested transportation have been accommodated.

Human Resources: Mr. Barber expressed he has been working with Susana Cunningham through the Supt. to assure that all the staffing/personnel needs are met.

Ms. Rood asked how is the district letting families know about the food service opportunities and she asked if we were using social media. Mr. Barber expressed that Ms. Henesey does have a dedicated Facebook page for food service and that she does post regular updates on that particular website.

Ms. Rood also asked a question about transportation, and if we would possibly need an additional bus at some point during the school year. Mr. Barber expressed that currently 3 of our buses are at full capacity which right now is 25 students in a 77 student bus, Mr. Barber expressed that there is still some room in the other buses, however he didn't think we could add another 20 students without possibly having to add another bus.

Mr. Nelson expressed that the numbers around transportation have been fluctuating and he expressed that at the beginning some parents were waiting to see how things were going before they committed to having their children ride the bus, therefore this will be an on-going process, Mr. Nelson expressed himself and Mr. Barber would continue to monitor the situation and continue to inform the school committee.

Ms. Rounseville asked if we know if all students have access to Wi-Fi at this point. Mr. Barber expressed we are on a waiting list to receive hot spots due to the high demand. Mr. Barber also expressed that currently he does not believe the school has had any requests for hot spots, Mr. Barber referred to Mr. Medeiros and asked if he knew of any families that were in need of Wi-Fi connection. Mr. Medeiros reported that the school building has great internet access, Mr. Medeiros expressed that in the last three years the school committee and the town officials have worked hard to make sure that Rochester Memorial School has received tremendous support for infrastructure. Mr. Medeiros reported that as for our families, when the survey was done back in August the results were very low, he expressed that there were one or two families that were identified and we were able to reach out to those families and support them.

D. Personnel

Mr. Nelson reviewed the following personnel changes with the School Committee. The following personnel changes were shared with the Rochester School Committee:

The following staff changed positions

<u>Name</u>	<u>Old Position</u>	<u>New Position</u>
Michael Forns	Lunch Para (3 hrs.)	Lunch Para (6 hrs.)
Lisa Mazzuca	Paraprofessional(reading)	Remote Learning Teacher

Ms. Rounseville asked if we were planning to replace Ms. Mazzuca's paraprofessional position. Mr. Nelson expressed that at this time he doesn't feel that based on student need and the learning model that we need it, however he will keep updating the committee if the need arises.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT- Ms. Hartley stated that everyone should check out our websites, both the district website and the Rochester Memorial School website. She expressed that the district website has "frequently asked questions" that she believes are extremely helpful, she expressed it was a great document very well put together, she also expressed that the calendar is on the website

and it's one click and it's a great feature for parents to have at their fingertips, she thanked Erin for her work on that. Ms. Hartley also expressed that Rochester Memorial School website also has great information on updating parents through the Medeiros minutes, she expressed all of it is great information for parents and all stakeholders. Ms. Hartley expressed that as she travels through town people are asking how the children are doing, she expressed that people in town really care about how the schools and how the children are doing and she expressed how appreciative she is for everyone's support.

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS REPORT - Mr. Nelson thanked Chairperson Hartley for mentioning the Frequently Asked Questions, Mr. Nelson expressed that Mr. Davidson took the lead for putting that together and he thanked him for his leadership and hard work, he expressed that it is a very user friendly and it's a living document. Mr. Nelson reported that the Commissioner of Education has reported that MCAS will take place this year and that schedule will be coming out soon.

Dr. Pearson-Campbell thanked the Rochester PTO for her personalized mask, she gave an overview of September 28th ½ professional development day, she expressed that the professional development ½ day was virtual, she expressed that the district partnered with Dr. Clinton from UMass Dartmouth, who will be hosting a district-wide professional development webinar from 1 to 2 p.m. focusing on remote learning, Dr. Pearson-Campbell also reported that teachers would be teachers would be participating in AIMSWeb training. Dr. Pearson-Campbell also expressed that her office is now doing office hours, she is in school buildings from 1 to 2 hours a day so that people have the opportunity to meet her on-on-one and also to help to build the relationships which she believes is the most important. Dr. Pearson-Campbell also expressed that her office is working on a parent site that she hopes to have ready soon.

Mr. Davidson gave an update from the Office of Student Services. Mr. Davidson expressed that the paraprofessionals took part in a training during the September 28th ½ day as well, they participated in a Master Teacher E-Learning Platform, the course was called Para Educators Roles and Responsibilities in the Classroom and he reported that there was positive feedback from the paraprofessionals. Mr. Davidson expressed that himself and Dr. Pearson-Campbell also participated in an Assistant Superintendent Seminar this week and he expressed it was a great opportunity for current and aspiring Assistant Superintendents throughout the Commonwealth to meet colleagues from similar backgrounds across the state and he thanked the school district for the opportunity.

Mr. Nelson reported to the school committee that he is taking part in the MASC Superintendent Mentor Program, Mr. Nelson expressed the program and his mentor has been a great resource to him as a new superintendent. Mr. Nelson thought it was important for Mr. Davidson and Dr. Pearson-Campbell to also have similar opportunities, he believes the Asst. Supt. Seminar is a great program.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT- Mr. Medeiros expressed that some of the items in his report have already been outlined throughout the meeting. Mr. Medeiros expressed that he had his 1st virtual "open house" on September 16th, it was from 6 to 7 pm, parents/guardians were invited to participate via zoom in a meeting with himself, Mr. West, Ms. Murphy. Ms. Murphy did her overview of the health and safety presentation, Mr. West and Mr. Medeiros did the bullying & harassment presentation, Mr. Medeiros expressed that they also highlighted key components of what parents should expect this school year. During the open house they played a video put together by the specialists, then from 6:30 to 7:00 parents were able to go to grade level open houses. Mr. Medeiros expressed that they had great feedback from both staff and parents.

Mr. Medeiros expressed that they conducted two soft fire drills on September 24th and 25th, he reported that both went smooth, Mr. Medeiros reported they will be doing a live one with the alarm in a couple of weeks.

Mr. Medeiros thanked the Kindergarten team and the Early Childhood Coordinator, Ms. Doreen Lopes for putting together a wonderful and well organized Kindergarten screening and orientation. Mr. Medeiros expressed that the kindergarten students had a wonderful start to their school year which began on September 24th and September 25th.

Ms. Duggan asked 1:12:12

For more information please refer to “RSC 10012020 Principal Report”

VIII. School Committee

B. Committee Reports

- 1. Budget Subcommittee - NONE**
- 2. ORR District School Committee-**Ms. Rood reported that the ORR School Committee met on September 9th are reviewed Reopening Update, Parking Fee Reduction, Creation of the new Anti-Racism Sub-Committee, School Committee Format and approval of MOA.
- 3. SMEC-** Ms. Fernandes reported that they met on September 30th and the following items were reviewed and actions were taken: Minutes of August 19, 2020 were approved as submitted, primary topic of discussion was re: “trimming” expenses, as appropriate, as a result of our SMEC services being tuition-based, our programs are “safe”, COVID Relief Funds, board approved the Director of finance and Operations to apply for any relief funds for which the collaborative may be eligible (no money for PPE’s), the Board approved Dr. Cooper’s, SMEC’s Executive Director, Summative Evaluation, as Exemplary, next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, November 30, 2020 at 5:30
- 4. READS-** Mr. Nelson attended the first meeting, the three items were reopening plan, personnel and the new facilities. Mr. Nelson asked Mr. Davidson to report since he had the opportunity to take a tour of the new site. Mr. Davidson reported that he had the opportunity to tour the new site on Bedford Street in Middleboro, right off of route 44, he expressed it’s a beautiful location, he reported that the building has been completed gutted, it’s 33,000 square feet, they will have multiple classrooms, break-out spaces and an addition for a gym.
- 5. Tri-Town Foundation – NONE**
- 6. Early Childhood Council-** next meeting is October 22nd.
- 7. Policy Sub-Committee –** Mr. Nelson reported that at the Joint meeting on 9/24 the facecoverings, and remote learning policies were approved and they are in the process so scheduling the next meeting.

Ms. Hartley reviewed future timeline and stated the next meeting is scheduled for November 5th at 6:30 p.m. and the next Joint School Committee is scheduled for November 19th.

MOTION: by Ms. Rounseville at 7:54 p.m. to enter executive session for the purpose of exception #7

SECOND: by Ms. Fernandes

ROLL CALL VOTE:

5:0 (Hartley; yes - Rood; yes - Fernandes; yes – Rounseville; yes- Duggan; yes)

MOTION: by Ms. Rood to go come out of Executive Session at 8:15 pm and to adjourn

SECOND: by Ms. Fernandes

ROLL CALL VOTE:

5:0 (Hartley; yes - Rood; yes - Fernandes; yes – Rounseville; yes- Duggan; yes)

Submitted by Diana Russo