



Regular Meeting of the Board of School Commissioners
Tuesday, September 8, 2026

School Board Members Present: Charlene Seward, Chair Cathy Solsaa, Acting Clerk Brandi Barclay Karen Bossi Herbert Ogden Jen Rondinone Christina Sweet (<i>arrived at 6:10 p.m.</i>) Sophia Wu, Student Representative Board Members Not Present Ryan Carney Courtney Collins Whitcomb Marybeth Lennox-Levins, Clerk Stephanie Stoodley Danielle Goldberg, Student Representative	Also Present: Pam Reed, Superintendent Bianca McKeen, Assistant Superintendent Kerry Coarse, Director of Support Services Chris Donahue (PEGTV), Sophia Buckley-Clement (Rutland Herald), Peter Franzoni (Rutland City Alderman), et al.
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- I. **Call to Order** - Chair Seward called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
 - A. Roll Call - As noted above.
 - B. Pledge of Allegiance - Chair Seward led the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - C. Board Norms - Chair Seward read the Board Norms.
- II. **Approval of Consent Agenda (Policy 4.3.2)**
 - A. Minutes of Previous Meetings - August 18, 2026
 - B. Personnel Memo #680 (attached)
 - C. Bid - Construction Manager for RIS/RMS Kitchen Renovation (attached)
*Motion by Rondinone/Barclay to approve the consent agenda. **Motion carried.***
- III. **Ownership Linkage (Policy 4.2.1)**
 - A. Public Comment - None.
 - B. Merger Committee Overview - Superintendent Reed provided an overview of the merger committee, highlighting that, in accordance with Act 170, all school districts are required to participate in a merger study committee facilitated by the Vermont Learning Collaborative. She mentioned that Dr. Luvelle Brown will facilitate the regional merger study group that includes Rutland City Public Schools.

Superintendent Reed also stated that each district must appoint a representative by September 30, 2026. If a merger is recommended, the participating districts will vote in March 2028 on whether to proceed. She requested that the Board select a committee member this evening to represent Rutland City Public Schools.

Chair Seward noted that the Board would review the issues important to Rutland City Public Schools to ensure that the committee member is well informed about how to represent the district effectively. Superintendent Reed referred the Commissioners to the Merger Study Representative Charge document included in their packets. She explained that this document was drafted before the meeting to help outline the boundaries, parameters, and permissions for the representative to advocate for the district effectively. The document will be discussed and finalized as a group during the meeting.

Commissioner Solsaa nominated Commissioner Herb Ogden as the primary representative of the Rutland City Public Schools merger study committee.

Commissioner Ogden nominated Commissioner Cathy Solsaa as the backup representative of the Rutland City Public Schools merger study committee.

Superintendent Reed mentioned that currently, each district can have only one representative, but this may change in the future based on average daily membership. She emphasized that these meetings are public and open to everyone. Additionally, it would be wise to have a backup representative attend all meetings in case they need to step in. The schedule and frequency of the meetings are not yet determined.

*Motion by Solsaa/Rondinone to appoint Commissioner Herb Ogden as the Rutland City Public Schools merger study committee representative. **Motion carried (6/0).***

*Motion by Ogden/Bossi to appoint Commissioner Cathy Solsaa as the Rutland City Public Schools merger study committee alternate or, if allowed, second voting member. **Motion carried (6/0).***

Superintendent Reed will submit Commissioner Ogden's name to the Vermont Learning Collaborative.

*Motion by Ogden/Bossi to adopt the Merger Study Committee Representative Charge document. **Motion carried.***

Discussion - Chair Seward reviewed each section of the document, noting that this serves as a starting point for discussion. The document provides guidelines for representatives. It was mentioned that the document should be accessible on the website. Commissioners discussed each section and reached consensus on the following points:

- Section 1 - **Remove the phrase** "this Board already" from the first sentence.
- Section 2 - There was a discussion regarding the representative from Rutland City Public Schools already representing the District's best interests, including the towns it serves. Revise bullet two to read: "Debt issues in a merger study should be resolved without unduly harming other **districts.**"
- Section 3 - This section was discussed as focusing on gathering information and collecting facts. The representative can ask clarifying questions, and issues such as curriculum, programs, or staffing commitments may arise. Commissioner Ogden presented a scenario where something might contradict a policy, and the Board agreed that the representative should speak up if such situations occur. **Change "touches" to "addresses."**
- Section 4 - A question was raised about the grounds for not merging (financial stability and debt) and what will happen to the District's debt and assets in a merger. Superintendent Reed noted that the facilitator will guide these discussions.
- Section 5 - There was a discussion about whether this section contradicts Section 3. Commissioners decided to **replace** "Sections 1 and 2" in bullet three with "with this charge." It was noted that the frequency of meetings, votes, and any special meetings remains uncertain at this time, but Commissioners should be prepared for special meetings as needed.
- Section 6 - It was noted that, moving forward, the regular meeting agenda should include space for the merger study committee to discuss matters as needed. Superintendent Reed will inform the Board of the meeting schedule once it is determined.

Superintendent Reed will implement the changes outlined above and email the revised document to the Board before the next regular meeting. She will also submit Commissioner Ogden's name to the Vermont Learning Collaborative.

*Motion by Solsaa/Bossi to amend the approved Merger Study Committee Representative Charge to include all of the changes discussed. **Motion carried.***

IV. Board Professional Development (Policy 4.0)

- A. Superintendent Reed highlighted the flyer in the Board packets regarding the upcoming Vermont School Board Association (VSBA) Annual Conference, which is being held in conjunction with the Vermont Superintendents Association (VSA). The conference will take place on October 29th for Board Officers and Superintendents, and on the following day for all Board members. Superintendent Reed requested that any Board members interested in attending send her their names within the next week.

V. Monitoring (Policy 3.4)

- A. Monitoring Report: Policy 2.1 Treatment of Students and Parents/Guardians

Motion by Ogden/Bossi to approve the monitoring report.

Superintendent Reed provided an overview of her report. She highlighted that the policy is presented as written, followed by her interpretation. This interpretation is longer than in the previous report due to the complexity of the current policy.

There was a discussion about the necessity of including the rationale section in the Carver model of policy governance. Some felt it was redundant and time-consuming for the superintendent. However, Superintendent Reed pointed out that many policy governance districts in Vermont include the rationale to explain the importance of the policy.

It was also noted that, unless there are significant changes to the policy, the first year of implementation may require more time. In the following years, this process should become easier, as the rationale is likely to remain unchanged, needing only minor updates. Additionally, it was mentioned that monitoring reports will be published on the website.

The board agreed that it is a reasonable interpretation of the policy.

Superintendent Reed explained the rationale for the policy and outlined observable conditions and evidence before determining compliance. She reported that the policy is only partially compliant, based on some data and evidence that is still pending. Areas requiring additional attention include procedures for managing records—such as requests, access, retention, and secure destruction—as well as the absence of complaint procedures on the website and the need to update the policies and procedures displayed online. Superintendent Reed recommended providing an update on this report by January 2027, which will be included in the workplan.

The Board agrees that there is adequate evidence for partial compliance.

Commissioner Rondinone inquired why accessibility issues were not categorized under compliance. Superintendent Reed responded that facility assessments are considered when improvements are made to buildings—such as the renovation of the RIMS kitchen—to ensure that renovations comply with ADA standards. She noted that these are recommendations that will be addressed over time.

Motion carried.

VI. Governance Process (Policy 4.0)

- A. Policy Review and Approval (Policy 4.2)
 - i. Second Reading
 - C11 Student Freedom of Expression in School-Sponsored Media
 - C13 Students Experiencing Homelessness
 - D6 Class Size
- Motion by Solsaa/Bossi to adopt the policies listed above. ***Motion carried.***

ii. First Reading

- B4 Drug and Alcohol Testing of Transportation Employees
- B7 Alcohol Prohibition
- C8 Pupil Privacy Rights
- C70 Restraint & Seclusion
- D4 Title One Comparability

Motion by Solsaa/Bossi to move the policies listed above for second reading.

Discussion - Commissioner Ogden acknowledged the work of Superintendent Reed on Policy C70, which comes from understanding a 12-page document from the State.

Motion carried.

iii. Policy Removal

- 6130 Safety of Personnel
- 7211 Truancy
- 3310 Access to Public Records
- 7110 Elementary and Secondary Students
- 7534 Athletic Program Safety
- 8530 Essential Early Education Programs

Motion by Solsaa/Bossi to remove the policies listed above. ***Motion carried.***

VII. Communication and Support to the Board (Policy 2.8)

- A. Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Reed noted that Commissioners received a copy of the report in their packets. She highlighted a few things. She will meet with student representatives on Monday to discuss how to achieve more meaningful student representation. The report includes a list of upcoming events and news articles, a summary of the training conducted during in-service days, and updates on Tapestry and EPIC from Marie Gilmond. Additionally, it features a picture of the new communication board at the NE playground, designed for nonverbal students, which has been very well received and widely used. Under the Resources for Success section, there is mention of a first-ever half-day training session for substitute teachers. Commissioner Bossi expressed gratitude to Superintendent Reed for providing the list of events in the report.

- i. Student Reports - None.

VIII. Anticipated Executive Session - None

IX. Next Meeting

October 13, 2026, 6:00 p.m., Longfellow Building, 6 Church St, Rutland, VT 05701

X. RCPS Meeting Self Evaluation (Policy 4.1)

Chair Seward requested that Board members evaluate three items. The Board reached a consensus that they were actively engaged in the meeting, adhered to the agenda, and maintained their governance role while referring to relevant policies. Commissioner Ogden pointed out that the Board Self-Evaluation included in the packet still used the term "participate" instead of "engaged." Superintendent Reed will ensure that the revised document is attached to the Board packet for the next meeting.

XI. Adjournment - Motion by Bossi/Ogden to adjourn the meeting at 6:58 p.m. *Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,
Bethany Sprague, Board Recording Secretary

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Pamela Reed, Superintendent
DATE: September 1, 2026

RE: Personnel Memorandum Licensed

RESOLVE: That the LICENSED SECTION OF THE PERSONNEL MEMO NO. 680 dated September 1, 2026, be approved as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.

A. LICENSED SECTION

1. Resignation		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Effective</u>
Alojajejan Nunez	Elementary Teacher/NE	8/28/26

September 3, 2026

TO: Pam Reed, Superintendent

FROM: Glenn Scott, Director, Buildings, Grounds, and Transportation

**SUBJECT: Recommendation to approve the construction manager for RIS / RMS
kitchen renovations**

It is recommended that the Rutland City Public Schools Board of School Directors approve Russell Construction as the construction manager for the renovation of the food service and lobby facilities at the District's Library Avenue campus, which serves Rutland Middle School and Rutland Intermediate School.

The cafeteria, food preparation facilities, and Middle School lobby have needed substantial renovation for many years. These projects have been deferred in the past due to the difficulty of defining an optimal scope of work and developing a plan that effectively integrates and sequences the required elements.

At the June 23rd School Board meeting, the Board approved engaging TruexCullins Architects to finalize designs for five potential upgrade projects:

- Main cafeteria and servery
- Lower-level kitchen, food preparation, and storage areas
- Dumbwaiter mechanicals connecting the preparation area to the servery
- Main lobby, ramp to meet accessibility, and bathrooms
- Cafeteria windows and ceiling soffits

To satisfy state bid requirements for construction, we worked with TruexCullins to prequalify construction vendors and solicit cost proposals through a request-for-proposal process. Four construction managers were prequalified, and all four submitted cost proposals based on the current design.

A summary of those proposals is attached below.

Russell Construction submitted the low bid, at **\$359,780** for construction services. We request that the School Board approve Russell Construction to proceed with the final phase of preconstruction, during which the total project scope and total budget will be finalized. Final design and costs will be brought back to the Board for review and approval at the December 8th School Board meeting.

CM Bid Comparison

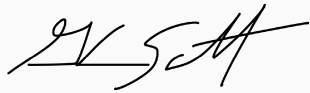
Rutland Middle School Project

TruexCullins

9.2.26

Category	Russell		Naylor		Stewart		DEW
Preconstruction	\$	15,000	\$	20,558	\$	12,500	\$ 15,000
CM Fee		3.75%		3.22%		4.50%	5.50%
General Conditions per Week	\$	6,790	\$	8,886	\$	8,500	\$ 13,515
Change Order Markup		3.75%		10.22%		7.00%	10.00%
Calculation	Russell		Naylor				
Preconstruction	\$	15,000	\$	20,558	\$	12,500	\$ 15,000
CM Fee x \$3,300,000	\$	123,750	\$	106,260	\$	148,500	\$ 181,500
GC x 32 weeks	\$	217,280	\$	284,352	\$	272,000	\$ 432,480
Change Order x \$100,000	\$	3,750	\$	10,220	\$	7,000	\$ 10,000
	\$	359,780	\$	421,390	\$	440,000	\$ 638,980

Respectfully submitted,

Glenn Scott
T. Plemenos

cc: B. McKeen, T. Plemenos, T. Smith