



River Valley Board of Education
RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
15480 Three Oaks Road
Three Oaks, Michigan 49128
www.rivervalleyschools.org

Regular Meeting – RV Middle/High School Library
Monday, December 14, 2009 @ 7:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

- 1.0 Call to Order
Meeting was called to order by President German at 7:00 p.m. Members present: President German, Vice President Ehlert, Treasurer Petro, Trustee Knutel, Trustee Wagner, Trustee Pfauth, and Secretary Farhat. Superintendent Robert Schroeder and Business Manager Cheryl Capiak were also present.
- 2.0 Pledge of Allegiance
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by President German.
- 3.0 Consider Approval of Agenda as Presented
Superintendent Schroeder asked that 10.7 Race To the Top (RTTT) and 11.4 House Bill 5594 be added to the Agenda. Motion made by Petro, supported by Knutel, to approve the agenda as amended.
Motion carried unanimously.
- 4.0 Public Comment on Agenda
There was no public comment on the agenda.
- 5.0 Consider Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of November 16, 2009
Motion made by Wagner, supported by Ehlert, to approve the minutes as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- 6.0 Superintendent's Report
 - 6.1 Student Awards
Awards for MSBOA 6th District All Star Band were given to Amanda Clark, Deanna Phillips, Heather Lockman, Taylar Thompson, Anna Graff, Kacie Mercer, Shelby Francis, Hannah Vavra, Lexi Schmidt, Jasmine Luther and Beck Williamson. Kacie Mercer, Beck Williamson and Jessica Zeiger were also recognized for being appointed to the MSVMA Region B Honor Choir and both Kacie and Jessica were also appointed to the 100 Voice High School Honor Choir. It was noted having two members of the 100 voice choir was rare and shows the quality of our choir.
 - 6.2 Student Board Representative Report
Kacie Mercer provided the Board with a report regarding the dates of upcoming Boys' and Girls' Basketball and the Wrestling events. Fine Arts were outlined as the Band and Choir both having their Winter/Holiday Concerts tonight and Wednesday 12-16-09 respectively. The Chamber Choir will be performing a concert for the Senior Center's Christmas Luncheon at St. Agnes' Church Hall on 12-18-09.

RVHS/MS participated in the Toys for Tots campaign and collected 259 toys overall, with the 10th Grade bringing in 105 toys and the 6th Grade bringing in 81 toys.
 - 6.3 North Central Accreditation (NCA) Report

Principal Wayne Warner presented along with School Improvement Team members Dick Gedert, Michelle Sykora, Marie Maloney, and Gretchen Butler came before the Board and outlined their progress in regards to the recommendations made by the NCA during their visit of April 2008. Seven Operational and/or Emerging areas of concern that were outlined in the NCA report were addressed via an Improvement Report submitted to the NCA in May 2009. The NCA congratulated Principal Warner and RV for the progress made on the recommendations up to that point. Mr. Warner stated that Teacher In-Service days have been utilized to focus on issues. He has also been working with their assigned mentor from NCA and will be submitting this year's report to him in order to address issues prior to formally submitting the report formally in May of 2010.

Mr. Gedert and Ms. Maloney presented Guidelines for Success – Safe and Civil Schools. The RV PRIDE initiative ties into this and is student driven, influencing the skills, traits, and attitudes that all try to display at the school. Teachers were asked to work with students to make this more than just posters or t-shirt wearing and several examples were given on how teachers had incorporated the values into classroom work. The work has been ongoing since last year and will be continued through the rest of the year.

Ms. Sykora explained that in the past, information from MEAP tests were not readily available to teachers. Since the NCA visit, Berrien RESA purchased the Data Director program taking all MEAP data so teachers can pull up individual students, wherever they had been previously to track progress. Star Reading, Star Math, and Dibbles scores are also entered for benchmarking the progress of students year to year. The information derived from this has been extremely helpful since its inception. In addition, tests can be created to mimic what the state looks for during MEAP testing, to help prepare students. After these tests are administered, individual students can be identified for assistance.

Ms. Butler outlined teaching and learning using technology to increase and facilitate greater student learning production. Promethean Boards are used in two different locations in the school. Also utilized is the WorkKeys online program, where the goals and expectations of the business community at large have submitted to the State of Michigan as a wish list for skills and abilities to be possessed by students. The program shows areas of weaknesses, which in turn helps teachers adjust curriculum as needed.

Mr. Warner added that teachers are asked to utilize computer labs and Promethean Boards at least once a month, but they are being used more often by students. Teacher use is tracked so if more resources become available, then those assets will be assigned to those who would make the best use of them. Mr. Warner stated that this is the fourth to fifth visit from the NCA during his tenure and further noted that it is the first time that the information is actually used to improve the educational offerings of the school (in at least one previous instance, the recommendations were rejected in the past by the District). The staff members are working together better than they have in a long time in order to meet the goals of the report. The administration has committed to this as a continuous improvement system.

7.0 Board Committee Reports

7.1 Buildings & Grounds Report

The Buildings & Grounds Committee discussed Board Policy #7250 as it pertains to the naming of school facilities. In addition, the Citizens Committee meetings up to this point were discussed.

The next Citizens Committee will meet the first part of January; it will be with the construction manager and architect regarding a different placement of the proposed elementary school. The current possibilities on the scope of the funding of the program are around 1.6 mills for a 15

year bond and only 1.2 mills for a 30 year bond, but the 30 year version will have 10 million in interest over that time. Placement on a ballot may occur in August or November 2010 election or beyond, depending on costs, planning, and commitment levels. The Citizens Committee has expanded and more people are participating.

8.0 Correspondence

There was no correspondence for the Board.

9.0 Old Business

There was no old business brought before the Board.

10.0 New Business

10.1 Consider Approval of the Accounts Payable for December 2009 and the Treasurer's Report for November 2009

Business Manager Capiak presented the Accounts Payable and Treasurer's Reports. Treasurer Petro asked questions regarding Hardings Market vouchers, which were explained as Title I grant money being transferred to students in need (currently 18 classified as homeless, which includes those who double up and live with other families). Ms. Capiak was thanked for her efforts on weekends and evenings to prepare for the meeting as she has been dealing with a serious family health issue currently. Motion by Petro, supported by Wagner, to approve the Accounts Payable for December 2009 and the Treasurers Report for November 2009. **Motion carried unanimously.**

10.2 Consider Schools-of-Choice Option for 2010 Winter Semester

Superintendent Schroeder asked permission to post vacancies as determined by the administration. Motion by Wagner, supported by Farhat, to allow Superintendent Schroeder to post the Schools of Choice vacancies. **Motion carried unanimously.**

10.3 Consider Approval of Spring Head Coaching Recommendations

The administration recommended the following spring coaching assignments:

Varsity Baseball - Neil Carter

Varsity Softball - Dave York

Varsity Track - Pam Kaniuga

Assistant Track - Bob Hay

Motion by Knutel, supported by Petro, to approve the recommendations. **Motion carried unanimously.**

10.4 Accept Donation of Ink Cartridges

Mike Harrison of Bridgman changed over to different printers and donated their cartridge stock to the District to use. A thank you note has already been sent out. Motion by Wagner, supported by Pfauth, to accepted the donation with thanks. **Motion carried unanimously.**

10.5 Accept Resignation of Varsity and Eighth Grade Volleyball Coach

Volleyball Coach Tia Roberts is finishing her degree at Purdue and does not have time to coach the team anymore. Motion by Wagner, supported by Ehlert, to accept the resignation with thanks. **Motion carried unanimously.**

10.6 Consolidation of Services

10.6.1 Consider Agreement

State Superintendent Flanagan asked that all schools endorse and participate in an agreement to consolidate services, not districts. By doing this, it allows the District to deduct reduced tax receipts from areas we chose, rather than what is dictated. Motion

by Wagner, supported by Farhat to approve the service consolidation plan agreement.
Motion carried unanimously.

10.6.2 Consider Resolution in support of Consolidation of Services

Motion by Farhat, supported by Pfauth, to have a roll call vote regarding the adoption of the resolution supporting the Consolidation of Services with other districts. **Roll Call Vote: Pfauth – AYE, Farhat – AYE, Petro – AYE, Ehlert – AYE, German – AYE, Wagner – AYE, Knutel – AYE. Resolution adopted (7-0).**

10.7 Race To The Top (RTTT)

Michigan is applying for a grant of \$400 million, which would work out to a share of \$55,000 to RV. The grant is for developing core standards and assessments as well as a national test, which could replace the MEAP and MME assessments. RTTT has fewer standards in general but the ones left are more rigorous. These standards may be in place by June of 2010. Related data collection is to be tracked by the individual students, individual teachers, and by the teacher's colleges (where they received their teaching certificate) to expose areas of improvement. Another part of RTTT are research collaborations, benchmarking assessments, and teacher use of the data. In addition, RTTT is meant to improve college prep programs, create three tier teacher certifications and administration certifications, along with mentoring and evaluation systems for teacher and administrators as gauged by student growth. RTTT has provisions for differentiated compensation for teachers who take on additional responsibilities (not to be confused with merit pay). In order to receive the grant funds, districts must have an MOU in place by January 7, 2010 with the president of the Board, the school superintendent, and the president of the teachers' union all being signatories. The fast pace is meant to make Michigan a better candidate for receiving the grant from the federal government.

There was a lengthy discussion by several Board members regarding the impact of the commitment on the staff for them to be able to comply with all of the tenants of RTTT. There were other concerns regarding the large amount of blank space and lack of information on the MOU supplied by the state for use. The MOU also commits the district to the RTTT plan without an ability to withdraw from it and the first step, should the grant be awarded, would be the construction of a 90 day plan for which there are no state guidelines for currently.

For the time being, the issue was tabled for a lack of information and short time constraints. If a meeting is needed before the January 7 deadline, Brenda will notify.

11.0 Items for Discussion Only

11.1 Mission and Vision Statements

Trustee Wagner summarized the different points of mission and vision statements. The issue was tabled until the January Board meeting.

11.2 Superintendent's Year End Evaluation Process

Board members were reminded to complete Superintendent Schroeder's evaluation by March.

11.3 Eighth Grade Washington Trip Request

Jeremy Kirkman presented a request to bring back the 8th grade trip to Washington, D.C. Pam Kaniuga has figured that a minimum of 45 students are required due to the financial aspects. The price this year has been cut in half - \$430 per person for 4 days/3 nights or 3 days/2 nights, which includes meals, lodging, tour guides (included at night for security) and transportation. Congressman Fred Upton will also meet with the students during their trip. There is financial aid and grants available for students needing assistance. Former teachers run the company so they understand the needs of children. Fundraiser activities planned include leaf service, snow

shoveling, and other community services. The trip is endorsed by Superintendent Schroeder. Motion by Knutel, supported by Farhat, to approve the trip request. **Motion carried unanimously.**

11.4 House Bill 5594

Superintendent Schroeder shared that House Bill 5594 has been introduced to prohibit school districts from employing food service, custodians, and transportation employees. The Board's opinion was solicited and was generally negative in nature.

12.0 Announcements

12.1 Board Election

Mr. Schroeder reminded everyone that Petro and Farhat's Board positions are up for reelection. Deadline information was distributed; the election will take place May 4, 2010.

12.2 Certificate of Excellence

The Michigan State Police Certificate of Excellence for a 100% pass rate on bus inspections was awarded to the District's transportation department. Recognition for this achievement will be passed down from the Board through Superintendent Schroeder to Dave York, Linda Weigel, and the bus drivers.

13.0 Hearing of Persons Present

Superintendent Schroeder shared information on an anonymous scholarship and Trustee Wagner spoke of Pokagon Fund scholarships that are available.

Mr. German shared that the RV Football Team was recognized as an Academic All State team this year. Last year the team achieved 3.13 GPA and this year they achieved a 3.43 GPA. The only other area school recognized in this manner was Lake Michigan Catholic.

14.0 Adjournment

Motion by Petro, supported by Wagner, to adjourn at 8:56 p.m. **Motion carried unanimously.**

William G. Farhat, Secretary
River Valley Board of Education