

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT 50**  
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The SAU 50 School Board met on Wednesday, October 3, at 6:30 p.m. at Newington Public School in Newington, NH.

School Board Members Present: John Balboni, Randy Bunnell, Maria Emory, Patrick Walsh, Randall Lynch, Chris Russo, Debra Crapo, Paula Tsetsilas, Alyson Baryiames, Margaret Honda

School Board Members Not Present: Jeanne Moynahan (Chair), Richard Spaulding, Mark Joyce, Jack O'Reilly, Scott Marion, Daphne Schwab

Administrators: Salvatore Petralia – Superintendent  
Kelli Killen – Assistant Superintendent  
Amy R. Ransom–Business Administrator  
Sarah Reinhardt – Special Education Director

Staff: Samantha Fuller, Secretary to the Superintendent

Visitors: None

**Call to Order**

Mr. Walsh called the meeting to order at 6:36pm

**SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**APPROVAL OF PUBLIC MINUTES**

*On a motion by Mr. Lynch, seconded by Ms. Baryiames, the Board approved the public minutes from the May 23, 2018 SAU 50 Joint Board meeting as amended. Vote: 7 in favor; Ms. Honda and Ms. Baryiames abstained.*

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. Petralia had no communications to share with the Board.

**REPORTS**

**Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Petralia welcomed Newington Board Member Chris Russo and thanked him for hosting the meeting. Also he thanked Chef Tom Lienhard.

Mr. Petralia introduced the new Secretary to the Superintendent, Samantha Fuller. She will also be the official minute taker for the joint school board meetings.

Mr. Petralia highlighted the following from his report:

Mr. Petralia welcomed Lauren Teeden the new Assistant Principal at Greenland Central School. Ms. Teeden succeeds Teegan von Burn who recently resigned due to family relocation overseas.

Mr. Petralia provided the enrollment data report for each of the schools in the district for the 2017-2018 school year as well as the 2018-2019 school year (as of October 1, 2018). Total enrollment within the district is down thirty three students compared to last year.

Mr. Petralia reported that there are five staff members from across the SAU participating in the graduate program with Southern New Hampshire University. A second cohort is to begin winter of 2019 with classes beginning in January.

Mr. Petralia stated the he and Ms. Ransom will be meeting with building leaders on budget preparation for Fiscal Year 2020 throughout October and November.

Mr. Petralia stated that the RTM Technology Audits were available in the board packets for review as well as in Google Drive. The audit will be discussed in greater detail later in the agenda.

Central office staff will continue to meet weekly one-on-one with members of the central office team. Mr. Petralia plans to schedule meetings with each support staff member working at the central office in an effort to continue to improve communication.

Mr. Petralia indicated he will begin his classroom visitations with at least one school visit per week. His plan is to be able to visit each teacher two or three times by the end of the school year.

Mr. Petralia listed multiple district-wide committees that he attends. For the current school year he is participating on the Professional Learning Advisory Committee, SAU Technology Committee, Grade 5 Transition Committee (Rye), and the Middle School Structure Committee (Greenland). He also continues membership to the New Hampshire School Administrators' Association attending monthly association meetings in Concord and regional meetings of the Southeasters' Group.

Ms. Tsetsilas asked Mr. Petralia when attending an NHSA meeting what is in the mind of a superintendent? Are there common themes discussed? Mr. Petralia informed her that the meetings are beneficial. Administrators are given pertinent updates from the Department of Education regarding various items such as state assessments or related educational updates. A multitude of regional topics are discussed regarding homelessness, legal matters, insurance. He also indicated that Ms. Killen and Ms. Ransom attend the Southeasters' meeting regularly. He shared that Ms. Reinhardt is part of The New Hampshire Association of Special Education Administrators (NHASEA).

Mr. Petralia announced that there has been a favorable outcome to a recent arbitration decision involving the Greenland School District. The matter involved a suspension of a classroom teacher as a result of inappropriate comments made to a student in the classroom.

The Rye Educational Support Professional Association (RESPA) filed an unfair labor practice at the Public Employee Labor Relations Board (PELRB) against the Rye School Board in May 2018. Mr. Petralia attended the pre-hearing and formal hearing with labor council, Ms. Honda

and former board member Mr. Brandon. A decision on the matter is expected within the next two weeks.

Mr. Petralia informed members the agenda packets include information regarding the AREA Agreement and Lister Academy. This topic will be discussed during the financial portion of the meeting.

The Board members thanked Mr. Petralia for his report.

#### **Assistant Superintendent's Report**

Ms. Killen reminded members they previously received a proposal to establish the SAU 50 Plan for Effective Teaching which covers evaluation, supervision, and professional development requirements.

*On a motion by Ms. Tsetsilas, seconded by Ms Honda, the Board approved the proposal for SAU 50 Plan for Effective Teaching Vote: Unanimous*

Ms. Killen mentioned that the Professional Learning Advisory Committee spent the entirety of last year updating and revising the plan for effective teaching. The revised version is now being implemented. It provides a rigorous professional collaboration between educator and supervisor. The committee will be monitoring the implementation throughout the year. Ms. Emory, a member of the PLAC, noted that she felt the plan has been received positively. She reiterated that she felt it had been an impressive process and commended both PLAC members and Ms. Killen.

The Board members thanked Ms. Killen for her report.

#### **Assistant Business Administrator's Report**

Ms. Ransom reminded members that the office to the superintendent budget balance would have discrepancies do to that there was no person filling the Secretary to the Superintendent position for the last several months. Overtime was paid to the support secretary as she was also helping to fill the position when needed. There were several other charges such as the purchase of a new computer, carpet cleaning, pest control and general repairs.

Ms. Ransom indicated that Health Insurance showed an overage due to that some staff members took a buyout. They are now enrolled in district health coverage.

Ms. Ransom indicated that she will include in the shared drive a power point presentation by Attorney Gordon Graham of Soule, Leslie and Kidder regarding default budgets.

Ms. Honda asked for further explanation of a default budget. She feels that as a board there needs to be more educating community members about the new default budget that has taken effect.

Mr. Walsh asked that a document highlighting the major changes in the budget to be passed out at the next SAU 50 Joint School Board meeting.

Ms. Ransom indicated that she has already requested such a document. She noted that Special Education is federally mandated so it will not be affected by the changes.

Ms. Ransom noted that the New Hampshire School Boards Association will be holding a meeting to discuss the impact of the legislative changes.

Ms. Honda recommended that a meeting be held to show how this budget change will impact our schools so that community members are aware.

Mr. Walsh indicated that he would like there to be a separate meeting to discuss budgets. If possible he would like to do a meeting within the month of October for Gordon Graham to explain the PowerPoint presentation to board members.

Ms. Ransom shared that the district is in the last year of our current transportation contract. Unfortunately due to a bus driver shortage there are not many bus companies to choose from. She also noted that due to the driver shortage, the transportation budget line item may increase due to supply and demand.

Ms. Ransom shared that Pete Latchaw received a call from First Student that unless the supply of bus drivers increases the bus company may no longer be able to guarantee drivers for field trips.

Ms. Honda felt that collaboration between schools, planning ahead with field trips and activities will be a major importance going forward.

Mr. Walsh asked when the preliminary budget would arrive. Ms. Ransom stated November.

Members determined a November meeting would be held on Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. at the Rye Junior High School.

The Board members thanked Ms. Ransom for her report and financial updates.

### **Special Education Director's Report**

Ms. Reinhardt shared that special education is also having bus availability issues. She noted that some districts in the state have parents assisting in the payment for travel support for special education students.

Mr. Bunnell noted that during the Secondary Advisory Board meeting at Portsmouth High School they indicated they were not having bussing issues. Ms. Reinhardt noted that the reason may be due to the fact that PHS does not pay for the students within our district to be bussed. Portsmouth High School only deals with the students within their own district.

Mr. Bunnell and Ms. Baryames mentioned that many school districts in California have done away with bussing to school; rather parents drive their children to and from school.

Ms. Emory indicated that she was working on sending out a transportation survey to parents. The RSA states a district must provide transportation for students living two or more miles from the school through grade eight.

Ms. Ransom suggested that we inform parents of the bussing issue prior to the budget meeting.

Mr. Russo asked for the rough estimate of the bus cost. Ms. Ransom indicated that the cost is different for each town.

Mr. Emory indicated she thought the bus cost for Greenland was in excess of \$200,000.

Mr. Walsh questioned the percentages of students occupying the buses. Ms. Emory stated she is currently asking bus drivers to do headcounts for each route.

Ms. Reinhardt shared that last year SAU 50 reclaimed the preschool program. Her focus was to recruit parents and created a more evenly balanced program including both special education students and non-special education students. This year currently there are nineteen students enrolled in the preschool program. Sixteen of those are not specified as special education, three students are special education identified. This is a more than 50/50 balance which is a positive. Ms. Reinhardt indicated that already there is a waitlist of students for the 2019-2020 school year.

Ms. Reinhardt thanked Rye and Greenland schools for their programming and structural support of the preschool program.

Mr. Walsh asked of the tuition cost for the preschool program. Ms. Reinhardt stated \$750.00 per year. She noted that Portsmouth was currently looking at universal preschool.

Mr. Walsh asked for the grant numbers for next fiscal year. Ms. Reinhardt responded that those are not available yet. Those numbers are received at the end of the current school year.

Mr. Petralia asked Ms. Reinhardt what the tipping point would be if the program enrollment increases. Ms. Reinhardt offered several options to accommodate increased enrollment. The program could add an additional weekday; they could also hire an additional paraprofessional. Ms. Reinhardt felt they have flexibility in place should the numbers increase.

Ms. Emory asked if the program would bump students. Ms. Reinhardt stated that the sessions are filled with how many non or identified spots are available and they always leave room to increase by one.

Ms. Reinhardt shared the complexities of the past in the relationship between the SAU 50 and SAU 52 regarding communication. Currently Deb Hiney, a certified special education speech and reading specialist, is filling the role for our students at PHS. Ms. Hiney is devoting one day per week to our special education students at PHS. She is now the sole specialist at the high school to represent SAU 50. Ms. Reinhardt has found this has improved the line of communication. Parents now have a better understanding of the exact professional to contact and when they will be at the high school.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Rye School District Configuration 2019-2020**

Ms. Tsetsilas reviewed with the members that the decision had been officially made to for grade five at Rye Elementary to transition to Rye Junior High for the 2019-2020 school year. A subcommittee has been launched including Ms. Tsetilas, Ms. Moynahan, Ms. Soucy, Mr. Petralia, additional parents and staff. Subcommittee members have already made site visits to other districts around the seacoast that have made similar transitions.

Ms. Tsetsilas noted that Rye is experiencing a decline in student population. Grade levels at the elementary school have decreased in size in turn effecting the middle school. This also affects

staff. For example, recently RJH changed to three person teaching teams. There is a specialty teacher for Language Arts, Math, Science and then all three teachers share Social Studies.

Ms Tsetsilas shared that there was a warrant article at a recent Rye Town Meeting to discuss/handle the decline in population and space needs. Several suggestions were proposed at that town meeting such as a reconfiguring of the town hall, middle school moving to the elementary school, middle school going to Greenland, or remain as is.

A final recommendation to the town was to move grade five up to RJH. Rye Elementary will be K-4 with preschool. RJH will include grades 5-8.

The subcommittee is currently looking at researching other schools in New Hampshire as well as gathering parental input to decide how best to configure grade five at RJH. They hope to identify the plan within the next sixty days.

Ms. Tsetsilas shared that she feels a larger student population through combined district programs would create a better experience for students socially. Parents would have the opportunity to meet a broader group of parents from other towns within the district. There would be more purchasing power as items are purchased in larger quantities. Ms. Tsetsilas reiterated that it would potentially decrease the number of board meetings that the Administrative Staff would be expected to attend if district schools were combined.

Ms. Baryames questioned what the next step would be.

Ms. Honda stated collaboration between schools going forward. Combining extracurricular activities would be a start; marching band, sports, clubs, social events or any after school activities that would introduce the students to students from the other schools in the district.

Mr. Bunnell felt we need to unify with the towns that attend PHS.

Ms. Tsetsilas discussed the benefits of forming a subcommittee with representatives' from each town to set goals and achieve positive collaboration.

Ms. Emory agreed that a subcommittee to discuss big picture items would be a productive and could be brought back to the individual school boards.

Ms. Tsetsilas asked Ms. Honda to update the members about the strategic planning session in Rye. Ms. Honda indicated the current prominent issue is that Rye schools do not own their budget. She felt there are areas where schools within the district could share budget costs under an SAU umbrella i.e. paper, oil, etc.

Ms. Ransom indicated that each district has its own tax number. The state recognizes each school as its own district and the SAU operates like the management arm.

Ms. Ransom shared the recommendation from the technology audit that the SAU 50 hire a SAU wide Facility Manager that could represent all schools within our district. One staff member to take care of all technology issues for all four schools.

Ms. Honda suggested making a list of all the positions within SAU 50 that could be shared between the schools.

Ms. Killen questioned what it would involve to have the four separate districts become one? Ms. Ransom indicated all would have to agree to become a cooperative school district. She reiterated not only would this allow for greater purchasing power but it would also open up the possibility to transfer teachers (paraprofessionals, specialist staff), to schools within the cooperative should there be shifts within grade populations. In a cooperative all buildings are owned together.

Ms. Honda strongly feels that community members need to be alerted to this option.

Ms. Ransom suggested there is also the option to look at a high school level cooperative. We are unable to coop with PHS due to that they are a department of the city of Portsmouth and follow charter laws.

Mr. Walsh voted to form a subcommittee for collaboration opportunities within the SAU. The committee would develop a mission statement as well as create a short term plan (1 year) and long term plan (5 years). The committee would research the educational, financial and social benefits.

*On a motion by Mr. Walsh, seconded by, Mr. Balboni, to create a subcommittee to explore the educational, social, emotional and financial opportunities through collaboration of districts within the SAU 50. Vote: unanimous.*

Mr. Walsh suggested at the next school board meeting for each district a nomination be made for at least one person from said board to be part of the "collaboration subcommittee."

### **Unfinished Business**

#### **Area Agreement/Lister Academy**

Mr. Petralia reminded members they were given material regarding Attorney Loughman's legal opinion regarding the AREA Agreement.

Mr. Petralia summarized for members the current agreement with Portsmouth High School and the SAU. Each district is paying a portion of the cost of operation of Lister Academy regardless if students from that district are currently attending.

Mr. Petralia indicated that after being advised by Attorney Loughman, it may be in the best interest look further into the legality of the current PASS/Lister Agreement. .

Mr. Petralia reiterated to Mr. Zadavec at the Secondary Advisory meeting that the SAU 50 districts were interested the in exploring alternative ways to pay its portion of Lister Academy costs.

Mr. Lynch asked what the cost for Lister Academy was per district. Ms. Ransom said it was approximately \$10,000 for New Castle and Newington and \$75,000 for Rye and Greenland.

Ms. Ransom indicated that if we do not continue the Lister agreement that the cost per student to attend would drastically increase. She also felt that Portsmouth would adapt further changes in their accounting practice potentially increasing charges to our district in other areas.

Ms. Reinhardt reiterated that some of the students attending Lister have the benefit of splitting their school day taking courses at both the academy and the high school.

Mr. Lynch asked if we opt out of the agreement, would we be able to send our students to an alternative school. Ms. Reinhardt said yes, however there are only a couple of alternative school options.

Mr. Walsh asked Mr. Petralia to reconvene a meeting with the original subcommittee in order to investigate the Lister Academy Agreement and make a recommendation at the next SAU 50 Joint Board meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **RTM Technology Audit**

Ms. Ransom shared with the committee members that a technology audit was performed by RTM in May 2018 for each building in the district. The extensive audit covered both a cyber security and technology review.

RTM helped to restore the server crash that occurred in Greenland at the end of the 2017-2018 school year however they found the server itself was corrupt and could not be repaired. RTM reviewed our technology policies and brought to the forefront New Hampshire House Bill 1612 regarding data security in schools.

RTM recommends an SAU 50 wide IT Director be hired to be responsible for supporting all current technology staff. Such a position would also be responsible for training staff on current platforms used within the districts, as well as managing software updates and server warranty. Mr. Petralia noted that the report identified that we have glaring needs within the district regarding technology infrastructure.

Mr. Bunnell stated that he does not agree that a SAU level IT Director would be helpful to all districts especially on a daily basis as needs arise quickly. His opinion was that it is a facility responsibility not an SAU 50 responsibility.

Ms Killen feels that we do need a position that will be dedicated to getting all the technology needs under control. Said person would need to be versed in the laws, hardware, software, firewalls and security so that we may reach the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline of NH HB 1612.

Mr. Petralia reiterated the scale of this endeavor and the urgency of getting the technology infrastructure under control by the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Ms. Ransom reminded committee members that there will be local budget impacts for the needs of each school at this time. She reiterated that every district should be on the same level, same technology, same policies etc.

### **Parent University**

Ms. Tsetsilas informed everyone that Parent University intends to host two parent forums a year. The first forum is scheduled for late fall/early winter. Portsmouth Neuropsychology Center will be leading a presentation on anxiety. Northeast Passage will be visiting in the spring of 2019.

Logos are currently being created for Parent University.



The program will touch upon disabilities, mental health and how this affects education. The goal will be to educate parents taking the mystery away of disabilities on all levels.

Ms. Tsetsila indicated a need for a parent from each district to communicate, promote, and schedule events. Each school will have a chance to host a session.

Ms. Reinhardt noted that the Parent Advisory Council would like to collaborate on this effort in order to further educate and support special needs education across the SAU 50.

#### **AGENDA PLANNING**

- November 14, 2018, SAU 50 Joint Board Meeting at 5:30 p.m. at Rye Junior High
- December 19, 2018 SAU Joint Board Meeting at 5:30 p.m. at Rye Junior High School
- March 27, 2019 SAU 50 Joint Board Meeting at 6:30 p.m. at Greenland Central School
- May 22, 2019 SAU 50 Joint Board Meeting at 6:30 p.m. at Maude H. Trefethen School

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Schedule a board meeting for SB2 Districts
- Reconvene subcommittee on Lister Academy

#### **NON PUBLIC**

*On a motion by Mr. Russo, seconded by Mr. Balboni the Board entered in to non-public session at 9:27 p.m.*

*On a motion by Ms. Emory, seconded by Mr. Bunnell the Board voted to return to public session at 9:43 p.m.*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

*On a motion by Ms. Baryiames, seconded by, Mr. Balboni, the Board adjourned at 9:45 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,  
Samantha Fuller

  
Secretary