

**Richmond Consolidated School - School Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, November 10, 2020  
6:00 PM

***APPROVED***

Present: Adeline Ellis, Ina Wilhelm, Dewey Wyatt, Peter Dillon, Jill Pompei, Mary Shook

Guests: Anna Smith, Cristine Lenfest, Michelle Smith, Rachel Kanz, Kimmie Leeco, Joy Mullen, Kim Hosely, Jen Stover, Neal Pilson, Kara Smith,

1. Call to order: 6:00pm Roll call DW, IW, AE

DW noted it is being recorded, per MGLCH30A,Sec20f

Meeting to be held by conference call due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

An Executive Order from the Governor of Massachusetts relieves public bodies from the requirement in the Open Meeting Law that meetings be conducted in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations through telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing or any other technology that enables the public to clearly follow the proceedings of the public body in real time.

In addition, all members of a public body may participate in a meeting remotely; the Open Meeting Law's requirement that a quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at the meeting location is suspended.

All other provisions of the Open Meeting Law, such as the requirements regarding posting notice of meetings and creating and maintaining accurate meeting minutes, as well as the limited, enumerated purposes for holding an executive session, remain in effect.

Web: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/442425013>, Phone: (872) 240-3412 Access Code: 442-425-013

1. Public Comments: none

2. Review and approve minutes: 10/13/2020 Motion to approve AE, 2<sup>nd</sup> DW, roll call in favor.

3. Principal's Report

- a. Principal Jill provided a detailed update on teaching and learning (notes below). AE asked about additional students being brought in. Jill explained a couple more students were added to in person teaching/learning last week but none since.

A video was prepared for the School Committee and shown to display what activity within the school looks like (this is posted on the School website). Another version including others aspect will be shown in future meetings.

- b. Review School Improvement Plan (SIP): Principal Jill presented the 2020-201 documents that was provided for School Committee review. The content is based on what the data shows, where focus areas need to be. IW: goals are great, likes the mentor/mentee involving community members. DW: asked about status of SIP with staff. Jill explained she wanted to receive feedback from SC and will send out. Peter commended the work done and said there is a nice balance in the content. DW asked that a revision date be added to the doc. The School Committee endorsed the SIP document.

**Positives**

- We held a CANVAS Q and A for families on October 20. Mr. Kohler, Mrs. Zigmand and I hosted - another will happen in January
- SIP is ready for SC review.
- Mrs. Zigmand was able to survey the students in grades 3-8 regarding CANVAS. Results show that 71% of students find CANVAS very easy to use, 12% indicate it is easy and 9% (six students) rated it a 2 out of 5. We are working on a few concerns but an overwhelming majority of students agreed with the following statements:
  - Canvas is well laid out
  - I know where to go when I log on

- I know how to access the modules
- The homepage is easy to understand
- We were able to successfully bring back all of second grade at the beginning of October and were able to follow that with bringing back all of Grades K, 1 and 4,5,6.
- I have been in classrooms observing some great lessons. Teachers continue to plan creatively to allow for distancing. Our 3rd and 4th grade goes outside to learn about nature in science. Our phys ed teacher is doing a lot outside. Our art teacher brought kids out to observe and draw/paint the landscape.
- November 3 PD day:
  - part of the day was devoted to learning more about CANVAS; sharing ideas
  - Paras were able to participate in some on line PD
  - Part of the day included a presentation by Jen Daily regarding anxiety. She will host a presentation for parents on Dec. 2
- REEF grants were submitted and we will be reviewing them

**Concerns:**

- Shortage of substitute teachers and substitute custodians.

**Other:**

- No Place for Hate is a self-directed program through ADL (Anti-Defamation League) that helps schools improve and maintain school climate so all students can thrive. To be designated No Place for Hate, a school must complete the following: Needs assessment, Formation of a No Place for Hate committee, Signing of the Resolution of Respect, and Design and implement three school-wide anti-bias or bullying prevention activities. Upon completion of the required program components, schools receive a No Place for Hate banner that can be proudly displayed in the school.
- The Richmond Record had a nice write up about our hybrid opening.

#### 4. Superintendent's report

- a. Update on teaching and learning (supplemental to Principals): Expressed how proud he is with the work the staff and students have done to build relationships. There is still much work to do but great progress has been made on teaching and learning in this new world. Peter updated the Committee on the JHSC (Joint Health and Safety Comm). This Committee has been meeting at least weekly to review data from various sources (state, regional, local). Nurse Lenfest is in constant communication with medical professionals and boards of health. The State has recently adjusted metrics and the day reported. A letter is to go out to remind families to stay on top of good practices, preventative measures, as we head in to holiday season. We have done a good job with hand washing, distancing and wearing masks which are really important to keep up. AE asked if consideration has been given to close the school (going to remote) after Thanksgiving until the New Year. Dr Dillon has thought a lot about this and explained there has been clear emphasis from the state to stay open unless metrics indicate otherwise. He will get further update from the Commissioner. We don't want to miss days for in-person teaching and learning if it can be done safely. IW: we don't want to overreact at this point to shift to full remote. Also don't want to underreact so emphasis is around continually looking at data and making informed decisions. DW: we know this needs more intense more frequent review, we can't overreact and short change students, but can't under react. Not in favor of changing right now, but may need to soon. Nurse Lenfest explained cases are in the communities at this point and not in the school. She is proud of what all at the school is doing. She knows things could develop quickly.
- b. Update on incorrect salary placement: Met with teachers, arrangements are in to correct the overpayments to several teachers. Peter explained there are new checks and balances to prevent in the future (root cause not factoring in a footnote in the latest contract).
- c. Tuition Agreement with BHRSD: Peter provided some factual information. Richmond has tuition agreements with Pittsfield, Lenox and BHRSD. There are separate agreements for regular tuition or full Ch74 vocation programs (which has higher rates). Currently 16 Richmond residents tuitioning in to BHRSD. DW explained this is expiring June 30, 2021. Two proposals were received, a 3 year and 5 year. Farmington River wanted a 5 year, so BHRSD offered that to us as well. We have always had 3year agreements. Both list 4% per year which would be approx. \$350yr for 16 kids. The BHRSD towns are seeing a ballpark increase of 4%. DW felt this was a fair offer, and there shouldn't be questions about us paying

our fair share. IW asked about SPED tuition rates and assessment of services needed. The School Committee is in favor of a 5year agreement with 4% increments. Vote in next meeting. DW asked about how snow days will be handled. Peter said they will be remote learning days. Peter updated the Committee on the COVID testing grant. Staff was tested by saliva-based test, on a voluntary basis. Between BHRSD and RCS, 120 were tested, all were negative. HE is waiting to hear back about another grant from the State. T-Mobile providing WiFi hot spots devices for those with poor remote connections.

5. Special Education Director's report: first PAC meeting on 10/27, the parents joined remotely. Talked about SPED laws, their rights, and the importance of their input at an IEP meeting. It can be overwhelming and they were appreciative of the dialogue. Got good feedback. IW: asked about getting reports ahead of time. Mary explained parents need to get it two days prior, per law. AE asked about how remote learning/teaching works. A couple home schooled students receive speech and OT services remotely, involving parents. AE asked if there is a move to remote, can students/staff come to school to meet needs. Peter said there could be some accommodation for highest need
6. Superintendency plans, next steps: Met with BHRSD subcommittee on 10/28. They are meeting as a full committee Thursday to confirm they are ready to move ahead. Everyone is concerned with time available, but they are more comfortable now. Look to meet with them again soon. The SC need to look at the time to provide an update the SAC advisory Committee. IW agrees we are at a point to narrow in on details and move ahead with BH. She asked if a meeting with SAC was needed. DW said at a minimum to provide an update and to thank them for the work done. No actions to be taking in the Lenox direction at this point. Focus is to settle things and tighten up how Richmond needs will be met.
7. Financial Report: This is being provided a day or two earlier to allow for assessment ahead of meeting. Peter responded to a series of questions received from DW. Strange year in that there are more expenses in new areas (covid related) and less field trips, for example. Some grant money was received. State budget still tied up.
8. Other unforeseen items: DW asked for updated perspective from Committee relative to meeting face-to-face vs remote. Based on convenience and ability to reach a wider group, we'll continue with remote sessions. Peter said it would be good though to look for opportunities to meeting in person if there were specific topics of special interest
9. Adjournment: Motion at 7:485pm IW, 2<sup>nd</sup> AE, Roll Call: all in favor.

Submitted: dw