

Rush-Henrietta Central School District
District No. 1 of the Towns of Rush, Henrietta, Pittsford, and Brighton

Board of Education

Susan E. Banker
President

Pamela J. Reinhardt
Vice President

J. Kenneth Graham Jr., Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Karen A. Flanigan
School District Clerk

Robert C. Bower
Jean M. Chaudari
Diane E. McBride
Sue A. Smith
Phyllis P. Wickerham

**Board of Education Meeting
Rush-Henrietta Central School District
Ninth Grade Academy
Diana “Dee” Strickland Conference Room
September 27, 2011
MINUTES**

All appendices referenced to, herein, are incorporated into and made a part of the official minutes of this meeting to the same extent as if fully set forth.

Others Present:
Mrs. Nerlande Anselme, Executive Director, Student and Family Services
Mrs. Denise Anthony, Assistant Superintendent, Quality Assurance and Community Relations
Mr. Stephen Barbeau, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources and School Operations
Mr. George DesMarteau, School Attorney
Dr. J. Kenneth Graham Jr., Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Andrew Whitmore, Executive Director, School Finance
Mrs. Dina Wilson, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction

I. Call to Order

Mrs. Reinhardt called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mrs. Banker was absent.

Call to Order

II. Executive Session for Personnel Matters

Executive Session

**MOTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION
AT 6:30 P.M. FOR PERSONNEL MATTERS**

**MOVED: Mrs. Smith
SECONDED: Mrs. McBride
MOTION CARRIED: 6-0**

MOTION TO EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 6:59 P.M.

**MOVED: Mrs. Chaudari
SECONDED: Mr. Bower
MOTION CARRIED: 6-0**

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Introductions, Agenda Review, and Announcements

Mrs. Reinhardt reconvened the meeting at 7:07 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Mrs. Reinhardt explained that Mrs. Banker was out-of-town. Introductions were done and the agenda changed to reflect item #5E becoming item #6A and item #6 becoming item #6B.

Reconvene Meeting

2. Public Forum

No one came forward to address the board.

Public Forum

3. Consent Agenda Items for Routine Matters (Reference Appendices #3A-K)

- A. Action pertaining to the award of bids:
 - 1. Offset paper
 - 2. Refuse removal
 - 3. Xerographic paper
- B. Action pertaining to payment of a refund of taxes in the town of Henrietta due to an Order and Judgment which resulted in an assessment reduction for Schlegel Systems, Inc. for tax years 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10, and 2010-11 on tax account numbers 162.12-1-15.1 and 162.12-1-15.11
- C. Action pertaining to payment of a refund of taxes in the town of Henrietta due to an Order and Judgment which resulted in an assessment reduction for Sears Roebuck and Co. for tax years 2010-11 on tax account numbers 149.17-1-14.1 and 161.12-1.1/C
- D. Action pertaining to approval of a donation
- E. Action pertaining to approval of an overnight field trip
- F. Action pertaining to approval of an overnight field trip
- G. Action pertaining to approval of an overnight field trip
- H. Action pertaining to approval of an overnight field trip
- I. Action pertaining to approval of the Shared Decision Making (SDM) Committee community representatives
- J. Action pertaining to approval of CSE/CPSE recommendations
- K. Action pertaining to approval of minutes of the Board of Education meeting:
 - 1. Minutes of the meeting of September 13, 2011

**MOTION PERTAINING TO ACCEPTANCE OF
 CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS #3A-K
 MOVED: Mrs. Wickerham
 SECONDED: Mrs. Chaudari
 MOTION CARRIED: 6-0**

4. Action pertaining to approval of Personnel Actions (Reference Appendix #4)

Personnel
Actions

**MOTION PERTAINING TO APPROVAL OF
 PERSONNEL ACTIONS
 MOVED: Mrs. McBride
 SECONDED: Mr. Bower
 MOTION CARRIED: 6-0**

5. District Policies, Regulations, and Exhibits (Reference Appendices #5A-G)

District Policies –
Second Read

Second Read:

- A. Policy 4531 – Field Trips and Student Travel
- B. Regulation 4531-R.2 – Field Trips and Student Travel – Overnight or International Trips
- C. Exhibit 4531-E.1 – Teacher Request for Regular (Category 1) Field Trips Using District Transportation
- D. Exhibit 4531-E.2 – Teacher Request for Regular Category II or Category III Field Trips
- E. Regulation 5200-R – Cocurricular and Extracurricular Programs
- F. Policy 8413 – Transportation for Nonpublic School Students
- G. Regulation 8540-R – Sanitation and Safety

**MOTION PERTAINING TO APPROVAL OF DISTRICT
 POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND EXHIBITS #5A-G
 MOVED: Mrs. Wickerham**

Item #5E on the agenda (Policy 4821 – School Ceremonies and Observances) was moved to item #6A and the remainder of the items renumbered accordingly.

6. Policies

Policies

A. Policy 4821 – School Ceremonies and Observances

Mrs. Reinhardt stated that due to the concern about this policy, Dr. Graham would begin by speaking about it. Dr. Graham started by explaining general policy procedures and then spoke about Policy 4821, stating that he was the one who put the policy on the agenda in order to align it with administrative guidelines. He provided background information about the policy, reporting that initial complaints about it included students being excluded because of religious beliefs and that poverty also became an issue. The guidelines state that events need to be linked to curriculum and done in a way that will not exclude a student from participating. The policy is not what or what not to do, but how to incorporate the guidelines. The district is trying to provide consistent guidelines. If an event is related to the curriculum, has an educational purpose, and is not exclusionary, it can be done. The event needs to be educationally sound, not just a party for the sake of one. Teachers cannot be directed to do this and thus the reason for inconsistencies from one school to another. Teachers have to use their creativity to create meaningful activities for the students. Dr. Graham will be recommending Policy 4821 be brought back to Policy Committee for clarification.

Speakers

Rhonda Delaney – 626 Erie Station Road, West Henrietta, NY 14586

Ms. Delaney is a Sherman parent and co-president of the Sherman PTA. She read from a written statement (attached). She is concerned with the board policy change and does not agree with the added stipulations the board is planning to adopt.

Jennifer Laird – 1453 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta, NY 14467

Ms. Laird is a parent of two children in the district (Burger and Sherman). She read from a written statement (attached). She believes memories of celebrating with students' school families are just as important as those celebrated with their home families.

Amy Poltorak – 20 Academy Drive, Rochester, NY 14623

Ms. Poltorak is a Fyle parent. She explained how Fyle has been rolling with this policy, and used Fyle's afterschool Halloween Bash as an example. She said it was sad at first, but she understands being sensitive to all issues and feels the policy is something Fyle can move forward with. She does feel the wording of the policy is confusing. She also believes there is a need now more than ever before to have parents involved in the classroom.

Tammy Hahn – 71 Wildherd Drive, Henrietta, NY 14467

Ms. Hahn is a parent in the district. She read from a written statement (attached). She stated that she would also be reading a letter from her neighbor, who was unable to attend the meeting. Ms. Hahn feels that the district will be sending the wrong message to students and staff by passing this policy. She spoke of a community environment, teaching students what that means, and taking a huge chunk out of it if

this policy is passed. She also said that there's more to life than what a student receives on his/her fourth grade test. She stated that when policies are made, they should reflect good practices. The district should not be making policies that staff is trying to manipulate.

Michelle Parker – 63 Wildherd Drive, Henrietta, NY 14467

Ms. Parker was unable to attend the meeting. Her letter (attached), also e-mailed to the board, was read by her neighbor Tammy Hahn. Ms. Parker's letter states that she is disappointed to think the board would altogether eradicate social engagements for current and future students at the suggestion of a few people. She feels that school should be about more than just decent test scores.

Samantha Singhal – 134 Stone Road, Pittsford, NY 14534

Ms. Singhal is a parent in the district. She e-mailed the board (letter attached), but mainly wanted to share her thoughts, speak from the heart. She believes that what children learn in school is so much more than math, English, and science. She remembers the many things she learned about life. Her hope is that her children remember not what students' backgrounds are, but that they all bring something valuable, something they should be proud of, and want to celebrate that. She said she understands the difficulties the district is dealing with, but if the intent is good, comes from a pure place, and people are not forced to participate, it should not matter.

Mary Coryell – 39 Shamrock Drive, Rochester, NY 14623

Ms. Coryell is the PTO president at Fyle. She was appreciative of Dr. Graham's explanation as it helped her to understand why some elementary schools are doing things that others are not. She said it's been hard for Fyle parents the last few years to understand the elimination of some classroom celebrations. She explained that Fyle's parent group picks up a lot more parties that no longer take place in school. She thinks changing the wording of the policy is a good idea as it is currently very confusing. She has recommended upset parents talk to teachers and principals.

Mrs. Reinhardt thanked everyone for their comments. The board decided to send the policy back to Policy Committee. The intent is good, but the wording needs to be clarified. There is a need to include information about no student being excluded, activities being aligned with curriculum, and celebrations not being banned. The policy needs to be more specific as to celebrations being allowed. Mrs. Chaudari asked audience members to please take back the message to schools that celebrations are certainly allowed.

B. District Policy Quarterly Review (Reference Appendix #6B)

This agenda item was moved from item #6 to item #6B.

Mrs. Reinhardt explained the district policy quarterly review process to audience members. The 9000 series district policies were reviewed. Minor changes were made to policies 9211, 9230, and 9520.2-R. Policies 9110.4, 9160, 9211-R, 9301, 9320, 9520.3, and 9531 will be brought back for a second read. Policies 9125, 9260, 9260-R, 9310, 9700, 9720, and 9720-R will be sent to Policy Committee. Mrs. Smith suggested having a Policy Committee meeting as soon as possible in hopes of being able to bring Policy 4821 back to the next meeting.

7. District Reserve Funds

- A. Action pertaining to approval of the district plan for Funding and Use of Reserves
(Reference Appendix #7A)

MOTION PERTAINING TO APPROVAL OF THE DISTRICT PLAN FOR FUNDING AND USE OF RESERVES

MOVED: Mrs. Smith
SECONDED: Mrs. Wickerham
MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Dr. Graham said the plan has remained unchanged. Mr. Whitmore reported that the past year's reserves usage was 12 percent, mainly due to Phase III, and that this year's usage will be almost 20 percent as a result of budgeted draw down of the reserves. He also said that it's good we have the reserves overall because tax certiorari claims so far, year-to-date, have been about \$400,000. Mrs. Reinhardt informed the board that the district did not have a written plan for its reserves prior to the NYS comptroller's audit. In order to comply with the requirements, this plan will be adopted annually.

8. Superintendent's Report

- A. Written Information (Reference Appendix #9A-1)

1. Incidental Teaching Report

Dr. Graham asked if there were any questions. Mr. Bower asked for an explanation of incidental teaching. Mr. Barbeau explained that it was a teacher who was teaching out of their assigned certification area.

- B. Oral Information

1. Visual Arts Advisory Council

Dr. Graham reported that Donna Watts, director of art, music and technology, asked a couple of years ago about forming this group and that he suggested seeing what the interest level was before formalizing one. The group has decided to do a community project and if the activity goes well and the group feels a need to exist, they will seek district certification at the board level. It's currently in the exploratory stages.

2. Secondary Grading Practices Report

Dr. Graham asked Mrs. Wilson to provide a brief report. Mrs. Wilson reported that the goal is to eliminate the inflation of grades. Teachers are going through curriculum maps and assessments to make sure they are in alignment with standards. The goal is to have consistency within a course and department. Mrs. Wilson is in the process of putting together a question and answer sheet. She stated that some required assessments have become common assessments and that the goal is to have them become all common assessments. The confusion was around required versus common assessments thus the reason teachers could not provide definitive answers to students on the first day of school.

Dr. Graham mentioned a student who would potentially be coming to address the board who had a concern regarding physical education grading. Mrs. Wilson explained that physical education's grading system is based on a very specific New York state rubric. She reiterated that the fitness component of the grade is given based on the student's improvement from their original score. It's growth toward their benchmark. She feels that students may have some misconceptions. The fitness component is used from the state standards. Mrs. Chaudari would like to make sure that students are provided with the correct information as some staff

District Reserve
Funds

Superintendent's
Report

members are providing conflicting information. She feels physical education grading penalizes students and takes them away from school work time. Dr. Graham stated that physical education is part of the state standards. Mrs. Wilson will follow-up with the athletic director and physical education teachers. Dr. Graham said that he is sensitive that this will not be perfect from the get go, but that the spirit is to be more consistent with grading practices.

3. Grading Policies

Dr. Graham informed the board that the academic eligibility policy had kicked in and that three weeks into the school year, there are 12 students currently academic ineligible for extracurricular activities.

4. Fall NYSCOSS Conference Report

Dr. Graham reported that during a session with Commissioner John King he spoke about the status of Race to the Top, college and career readiness, and districts finding answers by being innovative and creative. Dr. Graham went over some of the questions and responses that arose during the session. He said there does not appear to be any solutions. He attended a couple of sessions on APPR (Annual Professional Performance Review) and said there was nothing new. The Legislative Committee talk was on mandate relief and having the government, businesses, and schools all work together.

9. New Business

A. NYSSBA Resolutions

Mrs. Reinhardt reminded board members to turn their tally sheets into her.

B. Homecoming Parade

The homecoming parade is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 15. Mrs. Reinhardt, Mrs. McBride, Mr. Bower, and Mrs. Smith plan to attend. The alumni gathering will follow the parade.

10. Board Member Reports

A. MCSBA Information Exchange Committee (Sept. 14)

Mrs. Wickerham forwarded the minutes. She was not able to attend the September meeting.

B. MCSBA Labor Relations Committee (Sept. 21)

Mrs. Smith reported that the committee met last week to set the topics for the year. She said the Oct. 19 meeting will focus on the Regents Task Force Report on Principal Certification and then read the list of remaining topics. She forwarded the minutes.

C. BOCES Visit

Mrs. Reinhardt asked if anyone was interested in attending a Monroe #1 BOCES visit. Mr. Bower is interested. Mrs. McBride may attend. Dr. Graham will plan to go as well. Mrs. Flanigan will follow-up with BOCES.

D. NYSSBA Annual Meeting Coverage

Mrs. Reinhardt stated that Mrs. Banker was concerned that she may have a conference conflict with being the voting delegate. Dr. Graham believes someone has to be designated as an alternate. Mrs. Smith has agreed to be the alternate.

11. Board Meeting Recap

- A student may attend the next meeting to speak about physical education grading.
- Policy 4821 will be sent back to Policy Committee. The committee will try to meet in time to bring the information back to the next board meeting.

New Business

Board Member Reports

Meeting Recap

- Mrs. Wilson will follow-up with Tom Stewart and physical education staff regarding expectations for students
- Mrs. Wilson will have a grading practices question and answer sheet included in the next board packet.
- Please bring the Academic Intervention Services packet you received tonight to the next board meeting.
- The homecoming parade is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 15.
- Mrs. Flanigan will make plans for a Monroe #1 BOCES visit.
- Mrs. Smith will be the NYSSBA voting delegate alternate.

12. Adjournment

Adjournment

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:25 P.M.
MOVED: Mrs. McBride
SECONDED: Mr. Bower
MOTION CARRIED: 6-0

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Flanigan
School District Clerk
Board Approved: October 11, 2011