

2021-22 INTER-SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Date | time 11/17/21 9:00 a.m.

In Attendance

Heather Berkenpas, Brandi Berta, Bobbi Jo Blanton, Julie Childress, Mike Cuneo, Alison Gervat, Lisa Jacobs, Joann Lambert, Kerrie LeBlanc, Mindy McGinn, Mandy Mynhier-Lake, Jodi Nester, Lindesy O'Rourke, Mike Ramm, Christie Ramsey, Renee Russo, Sonia Schmidt, Dr. Michael Shibler, Jill Silverman, Jessica Steele, Jenny Thompson, Sharon Wells, Korie Wilson-Crawford

Advisory Committee

The purpose of the Inter-School Advisory Council is to act as an advisory group to the school superintendent and other administrative personnel, to serve as a sounding board for pertinent issues, and to facilitate communication to the community.

Superintendent/Central Office Reports

Dr. Shibler (Superintendent)

- At this meeting, Dr. Shibler's left eye was blackened and he had a band-aid near his left eye from a Squamous Cell Carcinoma removal (SCC is a type of skin cancer)
- With Dr. Shibler's retirement at the end of the month, this was his last meeting with ISAC
- There will be a retirement celebration for Dr. Shibler, for employees and volunteers, on 12/15 at the Freshman Center from 2-5 pm.
- Accomplishments during Dr. Shibler's tenure
 - 68 state championships in 18 different sports
 - 4th state title in a row for band
 - All schools in the district are Blue Ribbon schools
 - Every school millage has been passed by the community
- What's next for Dr. Shibler?
 - He recently married at the end of October and welcomed a grandson in early November, so he will be spending time with his family
 - He will be doing something productive – it's "in his DNA"
 - Might run for state legislature
 - In January he's taking a trip to Arizona
 - He will remain in the community upon retirement
- Fun fact – Dr. Shibler's phone rang during the meeting and his ring tone is "Sweet Home Alabama"

Korie Wilson-Crawford (Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources)

- Update on the search for Dr. Shibley's replacement
 - The Board of Education (BoE) selected Michigan Leadership Institute to conduct the search. Leading the search is Tim Quinn, who came out of retirement specifically to help choose Dr. Shibley's replacement.
 - The BoE will be soliciting input from all stakeholders. The community and staff at RPS will be asked input via surveys. ISAC will most likely get to be a part of a focus group with the candidate(s).
 - The interview process will start after the BoE gets information to the stakeholders – the public can listen in on this portion.
- On Dec. 13th, Rams XI (Rockford Action Model for Success – vision for the future and innovation for students, curriculum, finance, & community) will be adopted with a start date of Jan. 1 – through the next 3 years, so a strategic plan will already be in place for the new superintendent.
 - At the next ISAC meeting, 1/26/22, ISAC members will get to see RAMS XI and give input on what the next leader of RPS should be and what they should focus on.

Mike Ramm (Assistant Superintendent of Instruction)

- Classroom furniture pilot
 - In 2019-2020, \$15 million was allocated to overhaul all classroom spaces. A think tank consisting of RPS teachers and staff have been meeting and have determined that classroom furniture needs to be adaptable, age specific, durable, and multi-faceted (ex wobble stools, soft seating, standing desks, tables that can be configured to promote collaboration). RPS wants to move away from “rows and toes” and promote movement and collaboration. COVID delayed the process a bit, but this new pilot program has finally launched (11/16).
 - 40 teachers across the district will partake in this pilot. Starting in March (3rd Tri), 10 classrooms (2 lower elementary, 2 upper elementary, 3 middle school, & 3 high school) will be outfitted with test furniture. At the end of the trimester, the set-up will rotate to another classroom in the district. The furniture will be tested for a total of 4 trimesters.
 - In spring 2023, final furniture selections will begin. The end game is to outfit the new elementary school with this new furniture in 2024.
 - A 2nd Creative Learning Center will be built at some point in the future, also outfitted with these selections – location TBD.
 - Media centers will mirror the furniture and technology at the Creative Learning Center, albeit on a smaller scale.

District Literacy Update (Sharon Wells, Literacy Director)

- Response to Intervention (RTI)
 - All teachers teach students at the highest level. RTI helps those students not at level and students that need foundational skills. This happens 2-3 times a week for differentiated work/Flex Time. A Collaborative Action Team (CAT) meets every 3 weeks to reevaluate students so that no one is left behind. All kids are tested 3 times per year.
 - RPS has 22 interventionalists in K-8 and requires all of them to be certified teachers.

- Science of Reading
 - Emphasis is on letters and sounds, not on phonics. RPS is engaging with teachers and exploring this for immersion and implementation in the fall.

Finance (Mike Cuneo, Assistant Superintendent of Finance)

- 2021 Audit
 - January 10th meeting presentation by auditors
 - All school districts are required to have a 3rd party audit
 - There will be an addition federal audit for the federal funding that RPS received
 - 68% of funding is from the state of MI
 - 5% of funding is federal but it makes up 40% of the audit because of all the strings attached
 - RPS received an unqualified opinion on the audit – this means that an independent auditor has determined that there are no deficiencies or weaknesses, and the internal structure is good.
 - RPS received an unmodified opinion on the federal audit. This means that the auditor was satisfied with the financial statements that were audited.
 - There were no significant adjustments from the auditing process.
 - Big thanks go to everyone involved in the audit!
 - The audit can be found on the RPS website under the transparency icon. Both audits are posted there. They are long and full of lots of jargon, so if you just read the front page, it is a good summary in layman’s terms.
- New Elementary School Update
 - BoE approved bids for \$28 million
 - 2 years to build – starting in spring of 2022
 - Move in is summer 2024
 - School opens in fall 2024
 - Zoning for attendance boundaries will be done well before 2024. Ideally before end of 2023 but that date is still TBD.

ISAC Member Issues/Miscellaneous

Rockford Education Foundation (Jill Silverman)

- REF has granted \$40,000 in teacher grants over the last few weeks. Some of these grants are partially funded by the district, but most are fully funded by REF.
- Student grants are accepted through April 15. Grants are for amounts up to \$500. They must be educational in nature. Clubs and student council can request grants too. Details on REF website.
- Dr. Shibler was a founding member of REF and has helped to provide REF with over \$2 million in funding over the last 30 years.
- REF is giving out the 1st Dr. Michael Shibler Scholarship in his honor. 1 or 2 winners will be chosen, with the amount TBD. March 1st is the deadline for seniors to apply. Seniors entering into skilled trades can apply too.
- RAM Statue Fundraiser plaques should be installed before the beginning of spring sports season. To date, the total raised is \$112,000 (goal was \$20,000).
 - Band received \$4,500
 - Sports Boosters received \$8,000

- Transportation shortfalls – RPS still needs bus drivers! \$17/hr plus paid training (160 hrs) – requirements include a CDL plus bus endorsement, DOT physical for bus drivers.
- Our district needs substitute teachers! RPS currently has an 80% fill rate for substitutes. While this is much higher than many school districts, this still leaves RPS in need of subs daily. If you know anyone who might be interested in being a sub, please have them get in touch with RPS! Must be 21 years or older and have a minimum of 60 college credits. Even if they have limited availability, RPS will work with that!

Next Meeting

January 26, 2022, Administration Office Team Room (350 N. Main Street)