

2021-22 INTER-SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Date | time 09/22/21 9:00 a.m.

In Attendance

Heather Berkenpas, Brandi Berta*, Melody Butters, Julie Childress, Mike Cuneo, Mindy Duba, Kelly Freredge, Alison Gervat*, Justin Goushaw, JoJo Lambert, Kerrie LeBlanc, Beth Meyer-Kraff, Many Mynhier-Lake, Lindesy O-Rourke, Shannon Ouellette, Mike Ramm, Christie Ramsey, Renee Russo, Sonya Schmidt, Dr. Michael Schibler, Jill Silverman, Korie Wilson-Crawford

*attended via remote access

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.

Rockford Booster Bucks – Melody Butters, Rockford Chamber of Commerce

Rockford Chamber of Commerce has partnered with Rockford Public Schools to offer Booster Bucks to support our local community merchants and our schools. When Booster Bucks are purchased through the RPS website, 5% of every purchase will go to the organization of our choosing (Roguewood PTO, SI Boosters, band, choir, etc). Currently the band and choirs are top receivers of this 5% incentive. These profits are sent out approximately every two weeks if a minimum of \$20 has been reached. Booster Bucks can be purchased 24/7 and printed out on your home computer or e-mailed to the recipient. There are currently 65 local merchants that accept Booster Bucks. Any excess Booster Bucks remaining once spent, it is up to the discretion of the merchant as to whether you will get cash back, so smaller denominations might be a better way to gift. There is also a corporate gifting order form online for large orders. Booster Bucks would make great Christmas, birthday, and teacher gifts.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Schibler, Mike Ramm (Assistant Superintendent of Instruction), Mike Cuneo (Assistant Superintendent of Finance), Korie Wilson-Crawford (Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources)

a. Superintendent

- Dr. Schibler's Executive Assistant of 22 years, Marlene Clark, will be retiring this November. She has been with RPS for over 28 years.
- Dr. Schibler will be retiring on December 31, 2021, after 32 years as Superintendent for RPS. Dr. Schibler initially planned to retire at age 74 (he's just turned 76), but he stayed on to guide RPS

through the pandemic. For Dr. Shibler, being superintendent wasn't a job, it was a lifestyle. He will remain in the community upon his retirement.

- Korie Wilson-Crawford has been appointed interim superintendent during the search for Dr. Shibler's replacement. She will begin these duties on Jan. 1st. She will do this simultaneously with her HR job. She will have some backfill support from former HR staff. Mike Cuneo and Mike Ramm will be helping her out where needed as well.
- The search for a new superintendent is expected to take 3-6 months. An outside firm that specializes in executive leadership roles will be conducting the search. The broad job posting will go live in January. The search firm will then gather data from the community (with surveys to be posted on the RPS website) as to what they want to see/need from the new superintendent. Once these needs are identified, the firm will update the posting to be more detailed and targeted. The search firm will fully vet any potential candidates. Any candidates that survive the vetting process will then have 2 rounds of interviews with the Board of Education. These two interview rounds will be open to the public. They are hoping to have the next superintendent identified by spring break, with a start date of July 1st.
 - Fun Facts: There are currently 580 superintendents in Michigan, with 50-60 vacancies. The lifespan of a superintendent is just shy of 36 months – we are hoping that the new superintendent will want a long tenure with a commitment to the community and to provide consistency just as Dr. Shibler did.

b. Instruction (Mike Ramm)

- Re-cap of summer learning – 2,000 (out of 8,000) students participated in the largest & most influential summer program in West Michigan for K-12. We offered face to face instruction, transportation, meals, targeted instruction, credit recovery for high schoolers, and the Reading Book Bus.
- At meeting time we were in the 5th week of the school year, which so far has been more “normal” than last year. If you go in school, it looks like a normal school. Our kids are in good hands and in a consistent and productive learning environment. The goal is to keep the kids learning and in person.
- NWEA scores as a district (K-8, 9 Algebra only) – Results show that learning loss was not part of the narrative for RPS! Literacy and math scores held even with scores from 2020. Teachers from RPS really pivoted over the past year and delivered! But when asked specifically how these scores compare to pre-pandemic 2019, current scores are a bit lower.
- There has been a push to get district wide collaboration and to get each grade on the same curriculum. This will align grade level teachers, get them teaching the same content with the same spacing.
- RPS is working on making instruction and curriculum more accessible to students (i.e., posting more in Schoology. This is especially necessary in case of absences.
- RPS has instituted a Response To Intervention (RTI) process. This establishes priority standards (proficiency for students). Part of RTI is Flex Time, which is a collaboration with same grade level teachers, for students to receive targeted instruction to help bring them up to proficiency. The goal is for Flex Time to take place 2-3 times per week.
- RHS is partnering with GVSU to pilot a teacher prep course. RHS currently offers a cyber security course with Ferris and a health course with GVSU.
- Virtual school is still an option, although there has been a smaller response this year. Currently there are 36 elementary students and 110 secondary students in virtual. RPS will continue to

evaluate the need to offering virtual schooling but will probably always have it offered for secondary.

- RHS and the Rockford Education Foundation has partnered with Interquest C.A.R.E.S. to bring Gunner, a 2 year old golden retriever and counseling dog to the high school! Interquest C.A.R.E.S. (comfort, assist, reassure, encourage, support) selects and trains labs and golden retrievers to provide school counseling assistance, comfort, and support for students and faculty. These specific breeds are chosen because of the good reputation they have in school settings. They are evaluated in live school environments and taught ways to engage, interact, and calm a student down. They have a high level of obedience training and home manners. These dogs will complete a counseling dog competency certification, with the option to recertify annually. Having a counseling dog will help to improve attitudes towards attendance, social interactions, and slow the response to anger. Currently Gunner is available for individual sessions. In the future they hope to offer small group sessions, classroom visits, and school district events. When not at school, Gunner will reside with his handler, RHS Counselor, Rachel Kreuze. Rogue Valley Vets will be providing all of Gunner's care and medical needs.

c. Finance (Mike Cuneo)

- ESSER Funding - Elementary and Secondary School Relief funds – emergency relief funds to address the impact COVID 19 has and continues to have on elementary and secondary schools. These funds are a one-time only deal and distributed according to the poverty rate of the district. Higher poverty rate = higher funds.
 - Funding given to RPS to be used by:
 - September 2022 – 3.3 million
 - September 2023 – 3.5 million
 - September 2024 – 6.8 million
 - Compare this 6.8 million given to RPS to Kentwood at 17 million
 - This breaks down to approx. \$1,000/student whereas Flint gets \$28,000/student. Dr. Shibler wishes the discrepancy weren't so vast and that funding was equalized across all districts in Michigan.
 - To put the ESSER funding amounts into perspective, the general fund for RPS is 90 million.
 - Some of this initial funding has been/is being used for learning loss, sanitary supplies (COVID 19 mitigation supplies), electronic technology for remote learning, and mental health.
 - Not all of the funding has been earmarked yet.
 - Further information can be found on the RPS Website under the Transparency Icon and then navigating to Board Adoption.
 - There will be an annual audit on these funds, separate from the regular fiscal year audit. The ESSER audit will be a federal audit. Results of this audit will be published online once the audit is complete – expected date of late October to mid-November.
- Bond Updates
 - The new stadium is not just for football. It is for band, track, lacrosse, soccer, etc. There are two classrooms that have AC, heat, and are equipped with the latest technology.
 - RPS will be breaking ground on the new elementary school this spring. It is slated to be a 2-year build with an opening of fall 2024. This is on the NW side of the district, near Saddle Ridge where RPS has 30 acres.
 - Crestwood Elementary will be undergoing renovations

- The transportation building will be demolished and rebuilt
- Tech upgrades –
 - Middle school 1 to 1 devices
 - Teachers were given new laptops
 - New phone systems to be implemented.

ISAC Member Issues/Miscellaneous

- Transportation shortfalls – as with most school districts, we are looking 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!
- For the first time in 20 years, the Michigan legislature has equalized funding across all school districts. This means that every student in Michigan will receive a base level of approx. \$8,200 per child. While this is something that Dr. Shibley has worked very hard towards helping to accomplish for kids, this is not a state law, which means that it can be taken away.
- Rockford Education Foundation (REF) is celebrating 30 years this year.
 - Update on the stadium brick fundraising:
 - Bricks can be purchased for the 12 ft bronze ram at the stadium entrance. They can be purchased at the \$250 or \$1,000 levels.
 - The initial financial goal of \$40,000 has been met but there are still plenty of opportunities to purchase a brick.
 - The spring fundraiser will again be the REF The Taste.
- Homecoming dance will be on October 9th at the stadium

Next Meeting

October 27, 2021, Administration Office Team Room (350 N. Main Street)