

ROCKFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS  
Meeting Minutes

BOARD  
APPROVED  
SEP 24 2013

Administration Building  
Tuesday, September 10, 2013

Rockford Public Schools

The regular meeting of the Rockford Board of Education was called to order by Vice President Jude Makulec at 5:06 p.m.

Present: Vice President Jude Makulec, Secretary Lisa Jackson (arr. 5:09 p.m.), Mr. Tim Rollins, Dr. Michael Harner, Mr. Michael Connor, Mrs. Laura Powers (arr. 5:09 p.m.)  
Absent: President Kenneth Scrivano

**Motion** by Mr. Connor seconded by Mr. Rollins that the Board **hold** an executive session to consider the appointment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of employees; the discipline of students; pending or imminent litigation; collective bargaining matters; or other matters provided for pursuant to §2 (c) of the Open Meetings Act.

**Approved:** Unanimously.

The Board was in executive session from 5:07 p.m. until 6:22 p.m.

1. Call to Order – Vice President Jude Makulec called the regular meeting of the Rockford Board of Education to order at 7:05 p.m.
2. Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance  
*Mrs. Makulec asked everyone to remember 8 year old Thomas Kossow of McIntosh who tragically lost his life.*
3. Roll Call  
Present: Vice President Jude Makulec, Secretary Lisa Jackson, Mr. Tim Rollins, Dr. Michael Harner, Mr. Michael Connor, Mrs. Laura Powers  
Absent: President Kenneth Scrivano  
*Mrs. Makulec introduced Auburn High School Media Class students: Kevin Dennis, Stephen Hahlen and Andrew Kimball who work with District staff to operate the broadcasting equipment.*
4. Recognition – Mr. Earl Dotson, Jr.  
*Those Who Excel Winners – Earl Dotson, Jr.*  
*Three of this year's local Those Who Excel award winners will be recognized at the state level next month at the 2013-14 Illinois Those Who Excel Awards program in Bloomington. The awards annually recognize and honor people who have made outstanding contributions to public and nonpublic elementary and secondary education. Nominees who win at the local level are evaluated by representatives from statewide education organizations. Rockford Public Schools has three award winners for the 2013-14 awards cycle; two will be recognized with the state's highest honor from Those Who Excel:*  
*Lisa Jones, a Marsh Elementary School paraprofessional, will receive the Excellence Award from the state – the state's highest honor from the Those Who Excel Awards.*  
*Surgeons of Steel – led by Chris Magee – the Eisenhower program that shows students the real world of modern manufacturing, will also receive the Excellence Award.*  
*Kathy Rasmus, an art teacher at Marsh Elementary School, will receive the Merit Award from the state.*  
*They'll be celebrated Oct. 19 at the annual Those Who Excel banquet, sponsored by the Illinois State Board of Education.*
5. Petitions & Communications
  - Clark Wang – spoke of being upset with the District.
  - Jay Larson – thanked the School Board for approving the hiring of Auburn High School administrators.
6. Board Member Comments
  - Mr. Connor thanked Finance for the Accounts Payable report. He also reminded Board and community members of the Academy Expo scheduled for September 18, 2013. Mr. Connor thanked everyone involved with the upcoming Expo.
  - Mrs. Powers commented she did not receive calls regarding the teachers' first payroll, and thanked Mr. Lewis for his efforts.
7. \*Consent Items
  - A. Meeting Minutes: 08/27/13 – pulled by Mr. Connor
  - B. Payroll
  - C. Accounts Payable
  - D. Purchase Orders
  - E. Contracts under \$10,000
  - F. Travel – pulled by Mr. Connor
8. \*Bid Recommendations
  - A. 14-08 Propane Fuel Tank
9. \*Recurring Contracts  
There were no recurring contracts.

10. \*Other Consent  
 A. Investment Report  
 B. Interest Transfer  
 C. Annual Application for Recognition by the Illinois State Board of Education – pulled by Mr. Connor  
 D. Freedom of Information Act Log  
**Motion** by Mr. Connor seconded by Mr. Rollins to **approve** Consent Items not pulled.  
**Yeas:** Ms. Jackson, Mr. Rollins, Mrs. Makulec, Dr. Harner, Mr. Connor, Mrs. Powers  
**Absent:** Mr. Scrivano  
**Approved: 6-0-1**  
**Motion** by Mr. Rollins seconded by Mr. Connor to **approve** Consent Item pulled, 7A, Meeting Minutes: 08/27/13.  
*Mr. Connor asked the Recording Secretary to amend the motion to approve for item 14 – School-Based Health Center from seconded by Dr. Harner to second by Mr. Connor.*  
 Mrs. Makulec called for a voice vote.  
**Approved on Voice Vote.**  
**Motion** by Mr. Connor seconded by Mr. Rollins to **approve** Consent Item pulled, 7F, Air Travel.  
*Mr. Connor commented many people attended the National Academy Career Conference (NACC), and enquired if staff members are charged with reporting on conferences. Dr. Jarrett clarified this is an excellent opportunity for District staff members to participate and work with people to develop the academy model. The District does not currently have procedures in place to maximize session coverage; however the Administration will follow up with this.*  
 Mrs. Makulec called for the vote.  
**Yeas:** Ms. Jackson, Mr. Rollins, Mrs. Makulec, Dr. Harner, Mr. Connor, Mrs. Powers  
**Absent:** Mr. Scrivano  
**Approved: 6-0-1**  
**Motion** by Mr. Connor seconded by Dr. Harner to **approve** Other Consent Item pulled, 10C, Annual Application for Recognition by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).  
*Mr. Connor asked if the questions on the ISBE form apply to charter schools. Attorney Hoadley responded that charter schools are only subject to certain provisions of the School Code, mainly students and other individuals with disabilities, and Life Safety provisions. Charter schools are independently run and the District has little oversight. The District oversees special education, and it is where liability is attached to the District.*  
 Mrs. Makulec called for the vote.  
**Yeas:** Ms. Jackson, Mr. Rollins, Mrs. Makulec, Dr. Harner, Mr. Connor, Mrs. Powers  
**Absent:** Mr. Scrivano  
**Approved: 6-0-1**
11. \*Closed Session Consent Items  
 A. Appointment of Renee Schott as 12 Month Principal at Jefferson  
 B. HR Organizational Report & Addendum
12. Closed Session Consent Items – Student Discipline  
 A. GPA—AM-1 – pulled by Ms. Jackson  
 B. GPA—AP-2 – pulled by Ms. Jackson  
**Motion** by Mr. Connor seconded by Mr. Rollins to **approve** Closed Session Consent Items not pulled.  
**Yeas:** Ms. Jackson, Mr. Rollins, Mrs. Makulec, Dr. Harner, Mr. Connor, Mrs. Powers  
**Absent:** Mr. Scrivano  
**Approved: 6-0-1**  
**Motion** by Mr. Connor seconded by Mr. Rollins to **approve** Closed Session Consent Items pulled, 12A-12B, Student Discipline.  
**Yeas:** Mr. Rollins, Mrs. Makulec, Dr. Harner, Mr. Connor, Mrs. Powers  
**Abstain:** Ms. Jackson,  
**Absent:** Mr. Scrivano  
**Approved: 5-1-1**
13. Superintendent's Report  
 A. Superintendent's Report – Dr. Ehren Jarrett  
*Dr. Jarrett expressed his deep sorrow regarding the recent tragedy in the school system with the loss of Thomas Kossow. "Our hearts go out to the family, the staff, to the students. We want to do everything we can to come together as a District and a community to support that family and the larger McIntosh family in this time of need."*
14. Committee Reports  
 A. Education Committee – Mrs. Makulec  
*The Education Committee met Monday, September 9, 2013. Topics covered included an update on Honors and AP classes. In recent years, enrollment in AP classes has increased. Enrollment in Honors classes has decreased at the high school level as they are no longer offered at the junior and senior level. Enrollment in Honors classes has increased at the middle school level. Tutoring for AP level classes will be added this year. The residency policy for the District's special programs was discussed. This formally states students must be enrolled in the Rockford Public Schools or eligible if showing proof of residency in the District. The new policy will come before the Board at the September 24, 2013 regular meeting. Mr. Carson reported on secondary course proposals, including new and course revisions, assessments by student enrollment, and reviews from staff and community members. The charter school renewal timeline was discussed. The District's two charter schools, Galapagos and Legacy, reapplied and met the deadline, which was September 3, 2013. The District will be reviewing the governance, operations, facilities.*

and the curriculum. Site visits will also be conducted. Community meetings will be held from March through May, 2014. The Board will then vote to renew or revoke the charters. Summer school programs were discussed. The Step Up Program is for 8th graders transitioning into high school. There were 173 students enrolled in the program and 110 transitioned into 9th grade. Camp for the Future, a program for elementary and middle school students, was a non-mandatory program. This was run with the cooperation from the Rockford Park District. Credit recovery programs were offered to high school students. Students are required to pay, and transportation is not provided. The next scheduled meeting is Monday, October 7, 2013, at 5:30 p.m.

B. Operations Committee – Mr. Rollins

The Operations Committee met Tuesday, September 3, 2013. The IT Assessment Proposal was discussed. This will be covered under "Other Business". The Operations Committee recommended forwarding the IT Assessment to the Board. Mr. Schmidt updated committee members on the Facilities Plan that included a schedule, design and budget update. Mr. Rollins reminded Board and community members that updates are available to view on the District website. The Free and Reduced Lunch Audit was discussed. Every year, the District is obligated by Federal law to audit three percent (3%) of the applications that are not considered "Direct Certifications." Preliminary enrollment totals for each building the District was discussed. The Fall Housing count will shortly be available. The final item was the levy for the next calendar year. This will be discussed under New Business. The Operations Committee recommended that the Board keep the levy the same for next year. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1, 2013, at 5:30 p.m.

15. Action Items

A. Streamline Consulting – Mr. Dan Woestman

**Motion** by Mr. Connor seconded by Mr. Rollins to approve Streamline Consulting.

Mr. Rollins explained this is a software program for the Sungard system when a module needs to be created and the consultant with Streamline would do this. The Request for Leave process will be the first project for Streamline. Currently, District employees enter leave requests on the AS400. Payments will be made as services are utilized.

Mrs. Makulec called for the vote.

**Yeas:** Ms. Jackson, Mr. Rollins, Mrs. Makulec, Dr. Harner, Mr. Connor, Mrs. Powers

**Absent:** Mr. Scrivano

**Approved:** 6-0-1

B. Board Policy 2.110 Board of Education; Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers – Attorney Lori Hoadley

**Motion** by Mr. Connor seconded by Mr. Rollins to **approve** Board Policy 2.110 Board of Education; Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers.

**Yeas:** Mr. Rollins, Mrs. Makulec, Dr. Harner, Mr. Connor, Mrs. Powers

**Abstain:** Ms. Jackson,

**Absent:** Mr. Scrivano

**Approved:** 5-1-1

16. Other Business/New Business/Agenda Recommendations

A. Technology Benchmarking Assessment – Mr. Dan Woestman

The Technology Benchmarking Assessment is part of a Board priority to support 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology. A large scale baseline IT assessment has been discussed in order to get a current status and help the District determine its priorities moving forward. Mr. Woestman and his team have worked with PDS to determine a scope of professional services. This was discussed at the last Operations Committee meeting. Joan Wegner of PDS presented a PowerPoint presentation (attached) to Board members. Baseline assessments help to match vision and goals, and also ensure it can be supported by the infrastructure.

Discussion points:

- IEP Program is currently in the SunGard system. The assessment would look at the status on that particular module. If improvements are needed, and a recommendation if changes need to be made. Teachers will have input into this.
- Assessment of current incompatibilities, processes, etc., is part of this function.
- Three to five year plans must be submitted on a regular basis in order to be eligible for e-rate funding. The District needs an extensive three to five year IT plan.
- The proposed assessment should be in place from five to ten years.
- IT is more embedded in education and needs to be workable for end-users. It also needs to be seamless.
- This is a deficit spend. The request was made if a deficit spend issue comes forward in the future; Administration is more thorough in how the item ties into the existing policy.
- A request was made that the assessment is not made in way which would force the District to favor PDS for a solution fix.
- Market place and technological changes can increase the risk, and a flexible framework is necessary.
- The assessment conforms to the existing policy, as it is an ongoing process.

This will be presented for vote at the September 24, 2013 meeting.

B. Proposed Tax Levy – Board Members

Mr. Lewis began his presentation by asking Board members to recognize his finance team, who assist him in compiling the reports for Board and community members. He presented a PowerPoint presentation (attached) regarding fiscal year 2015, equalized assessed valuation (EAV), the current level and budget impact. The charts presented how the EAV has fallen by 25% in the last five years: as EAV dropped the levy rate increased to generate the same monies. The resolution proposal is to not increase the levy, and charge the Administration to begin looking for cost savings within the approved Fiscal Year 2014 budget. In addition, the Board directs the Administration to prepare its Fiscal Year 2015 budget based on the assumption that the tax levies will not increase.

Discussion points:

- According to the Wall Street Journal, Rockford has the highest percentage of underwater mortgages in the country.
- The District needs to hold the line on levies, which, long term, is in the best interest of the District. It is important not to drive people away, but to attract them.
- The County Assessor calculates the value of the county's properties, and then calculates the rate in order for the District to receive its levy.
- Under Property Tax Cap Regulation, all government entities are permitted to increase their levy year over year by the lesser of five percent or the rate of inflation. The levy years are not the same as the fiscal years.

This will be presented for vote at the September 24, 2013 meeting.


- Mrs. Powers asked Administration to agree to a guiding principal of giving Board and community members at least forty-eight hours' notice of a meeting.
- Vice President Makulec was asked to follow up with President Scrivano for updates from the committees on the report schedule. It was requested that the CIC report be on the agenda within the next sixty days. The Accountability and CIC committees will present reports at future meetings. The Budget & Finance Subcommittee reports to the Operations Committee.
- Ms. Jackson stated Ms. Hervey agreed to make a presentation to the Board.
- Mr. Contreras will give the teacher survey report on behalf of the Community Input Committee.
- Attorney Hoadley stated she is not aware of any of the Board committees not publishing their agendas within the forty eight hours. She assured Board members the District was not in violation of the Open Meetings Act.
- Mr. Rollins stated he would appreciate notice as soon as an internal meeting has been scheduled. Board members are liaisons, champions, of these internal committees.
- Ms. Jackson related an incident regarding a parent call she received. The family is new to the zone. The children were registered at the zone schools; the mother believed all was well. A week or so before the beginning of school, she was notified there was not space for both of her children at the zone school, that they would have to be separated. She also had the option of placing both children in another school. The parent opted to place them in the other school. The children are not eligible for transportation and their walk to school is on a busy street, and is approximately six or seven blocks long. The mother was told she is .2 miles short of being able to receive transportation. Ms. Jackson's concern with the policy is the Board has essentially forced parents into zone schools, and provisions need to be made for parents to send their children to their zone schools. Ms. Jackson has requested a discussion on this matter, and stated she has received many similar phone calls. Dr. Jarrett spoke of the importance of the Facilities Study. Contractual and space limit obstacles are problematic within buildings. The District strives to do everything to address these issues and meet the needs of students and parents. Atty. Hoadley spoke of when this policy was drafted. Mrs. Makulec and Mr. Rollins stressed if there wasn't space available, the District was to open classrooms, adding more staff if necessary, but not a financial limitation. Atty. Hoadley will follow up regarding this matter.
- Mrs. Powers spoke of a similar situation of a child starting kindergarten at a non-zone school. However, the parents were notified the child would be moved to the zone school as there was an open spot. Ms. Powers commented the child should be allowed to finish out their elementary years at the non-zone school. She spoke of the District causing chaos to the families. Mr. Schmidt spoke this is the practice of the District, to move non-zone students to their zone schools.


**Motion** by Ms. Jackson seconded by Mr. Connor to **adjourn**.  
**Approved:** on voice vote.

**BOARD  
APPROVED  
SEP 24 2013**

Rockford Public Schools

17. Adjournment: 9:06.m.

President:  \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary:  \_\_\_\_\_

Approved:

/if