

**TOWN OF ROCKY HILL  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
MEETING OF July 17, 2003**

**Members Present:** Nadine Bell  
Tina Lionetti  
Charles McMonigle  
Frank Szeps (Chairman)  
Marinella Tirillo  
Catherine Vargas  
Jennifer Viggiano-Grosse

**Members Absent:** Rafaela Coler  
Anne Schmidt

A meeting of the Board of Education was held on Tuesday, July 17, 2003, in the Council Room of the Rocky Hill Town Hall. Chairman Szeps called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Bell, to accept the minutes of the June 16, 2003, Facilities Committee meeting and the July 17, 2003, Board of Education meeting as presented.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Mrs. Boutillier noted the thank you note from A Time for Life for the \$400 from the middle school raised by the students at the seventh grade carnival. Parents, Philip and Noreen Theroux, commended the red team teachers at the middle school. Another letter was received from the CIAC commending the ice hockey team for receiving no penalties during the season. Thank you notes were noted from Patricia Karwan, David Coyne and Cam Vautour.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

**RHTA Liaison Committee**

There was no report.

**Student Representatives**

There were no student reports.

**Meeting Open to the Public**

No one from the public addressed the Board on any item not on this evening's agenda.

**1. Consent Calendar**

The July 17 consent calendar included approval of the retainer agreement for the 2003-04 school year to Sullivan, Schoen, Champane & Connon, LLC; the reappointment of Dr. Ann Milanese as the district's medical advisor; and the reappointment of Suburban Physical Therapy as the athletic trainer for the 2003-04 school year.

**Moved by Mrs. Bell, seconded by Mrs. Viggiano-Grosse, to accept the consent calendar of July 17, 2003.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**2. Personnel and Negotiations**

No report.

**3. Policy**

No report.

**4. Finance**

No report.

**5. Curriculum**

No report.

**6. Professional Development**

No report.

**7. Facilities**

Mrs. Lionetti reported that the Facilities Committee met with the Town Finance Committee this week concerning the proposed referendum, which included a concession stand, outside lavatory, office, gym, and three storage sheds of 20' x 20' at the elementary schools and middle schools. The Finance Committee recommends continuing discussions with the Government Operations Committee, which has a meeting scheduled for July 29. All of the discussions are in their early stages.

**8. Technology**

No report.

**9. Transportation/Accommodations**

No report.

**10. Liaison Committee**

No report.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**11. Computer Donation**

Mrs. Boutilier was pleased to report on the recent computer donation from Aetna. Early in the year, the district received twenty computers. The district has now received \$50,000 worth of equipment from Aetna.

Fred Ames noted that Rocky Hill received 54 computers; 53 were working. He planned to put fourteen in the Moser School music lab and four in the middle school art lab. The middle school now had all pc's. The classroom machines have been replaced in the middle school. Most of the machines being removed from the middle school are Macs. As they break, they are transferred to the Tech Ed class at the high school. Aetna also donated 64 lap top computers, and at least 46 of them work.

Mrs. Boutilier said there were two initiatives in the budget. One was for the replacement plan. Through that plan, the district purchased new computers. Some of the components of the Aetna donation are helping out with the shifting from Macs to pc's. Printers are being distributed throughout the building. Mr. Ames asked the Aetna for more printers, and they donated twenty more, including four for the Town to use.

Software has to be loaded; those costs would be taken care of with the regular budget. With the receipt of the donation, the district has been able to minimize the impact to the budget.

Mrs. Bell thanked Mrs. Tirillo for her efforts to receive the donations, and to Mr. Ames.

**12. Technology Plan Revision**

Mrs. Boutilier explained that three years ago, the Board took the new technology plan that was revised in 2000. There has been another request from the State to revise it again. The district had put together a committee. With the Board's approval, the technology plan would be submitted to the State.

In 2000, the district had 406 computers and 59 printers; now, there are 603 computers and 203 printers, making tremendous growth.

Mrs. Boutilier introduced the technology team which was made up of twenty persons, including Fred Ames, teachers and parents. She reviewed the plan components. The committee surveyed staff, conducted interviews with groups of eight to ten students at each school, and reviewed current literature on technology uses in the schools. The team found that today's students are more sophisticated in their use, and there are different needs at different levels.

Mr. Ames addressed the Board regarding the infrastructure of the plan. All State minimum standards are being met in the district. The district has the basic software licensing for 600 computers. They need a system to fully fund the replacement computers. The district has received over 250 computers from donations. The district needs to shorten the life span of the computers; the State's recommendation is five years; Rocky Hill's is six years.

The internet connection is shared with the Town. The high school, middle school and Stevens all work fairly well. West Hill is suffering. The district needs to fund the software. Answering a concern from Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Boutilier explained that Moser and Stevens shared licensing, thus meeting the State goals. Specifically at Moser, the goals are not met. The district has explored other options.

Mrs. Tirillo asked if there was a T1 line at West Hill; Mr. Ames replied that all schools are sharing the same T1 line. The wireless connection is in use at the high school and is used throughout the Town. Mrs. Tirillo asked if any thought had been given to getting another T1 line; Mr. Ames noted its cost of \$900 a month.

Mrs. Bell asked if there were any physical limitations to the wireless system. Mr. Ames explained that the wireless system depended on the devices used. Mrs. Tirillo asked if Rocky Hill had received wireless cards for the laptops that Aetna gave them; Mr. Ames said they came with wired cards.

Members of the Technology Committee reviewed the computer essentials course, which was the outcome of a Board goal of many years ago. Students learn keyboarding, word processing, and spread sheeting, write formulas and learn formatting skills. They learn presentation skills and PowerPoint. They must complete a project which counts as a graduation requirement. They learn how to use the internet. Students must incorporate research skills and put together individual presentations. They have to give an oral presentation, which is knowledge and skill based.

Students are offered a full year course if they want to have a higher level of skills. Students can opt to take a full year course. All technology courses are general level courses.

Mrs. Boutilier noted that high school students were asking for an elective type course on some of the peripherals, such as using scanners and digital cameras. They want some mini-courses.

At the elementary schools, students take computer courses in the library media center. Administration has been working with a library media specialist. There are instances where technology is integrated into the classroom. A subcommittee is being formed to study the keyboarding issue. That will be coupled with research on handwriting. The Committee will be back to the Board with more information. The plan will be worked on over the next three years.

A professional development committee was formed as well. The committee looked at the status of the professional development that has been provided in the district. They looked at the technology plan. Staff can chose technology to work on. Staff is at different levels of their personal skills, but is willing to learn.

There are technology lead teachers, who provide support. The district has a library media specialist. The district is now using an intra-net. Resources are being provided on that.

There is a need to continue professional development, to integrate technology into the curriculum review cycle and to enhance the teacher technology competencies. Staff will be provided with training in the WinSchool database. Now, there are certain tasks that are done manually. There is one technology lead teacher in each building. They provide information on training and give ideas for workshops.

Mrs. Boutilier noted that central office staff meets weekly to talk about where the district is going. The district is putting together a list of training sessions. They are at the beginning stages. There is a problem in that the district-wide data is in different formats.

Some needs are: complete WinSchool implementation, create a data management framework, enhance the district website, train teachers and administrators, and acquire data analysis tools. The website is being used as a resource for teachers. Policies, minutes and agendas will be listed. There will be links to State sites.

The district will be looking at the policies in light of the State recommendations, and was receiving input from the teachers. The district will coordinate the Aetna donation of

computers, look at the technology projects that were in place, integrate technology and professional development into the curricular review cycle, review the assessment with staff, continue WinSchool implementation, policy review, develop data management frameworks and promote the funding of the technology plan.

Joe Casperino, a parent and member of the Technology Team, addressed the Board, stressing that education is a transition to technology and use of resources. Computers can create and display information quickly. They bring information to the teaching staff and students. He noted the devices being used, including printers, digital cameras and scanners. He noted the importance of technology to the support staff. They maintain the hardware so the information can flow, for staff to gather the information and analyze it. Hardware has to run on the internet; student progress has to be analyzed. He noted the effect of technology on the teaching staff and the students.

Chairman Szeps asked if the district was moving ahead, or sliding backwards; Mrs. Boutilier responded that two months ago, she would have said the district was slipping; the Aetna donations have helped.

**Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Vargas, to approve revisions to Rocky Hill's technology plan as submitted on July 17, 2003.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

### **13. School Leavers Report**

Mrs. Boutilier reported on the number of students exiting Griswold Middle School but not moving on to Rocky Hill High School. This year there are 29 (14.87%) students going on to other schools. The number has varied between 14 and 37. Mrs. Vargas pointed out that a few years ago, the Board asked about exit interviews and the reasons the students were leaving to find out if there were things the district was lacking. Mrs. Boutilier noted that report was done the year 37 students left. Mrs. Vargas noted that parents have approached her because they did not receive exit interviews.

Mrs. Bell discussed the possibility of excluding Vinal Tech and the Vo-Ag. Students attending GHAMAS are not singled out. Mrs. Boutilier pointed out that the students attending the GHAMAS and Performing Arts Academy are still registered Rocky Hill students. There 195 Griswold students graduating, 29 leaving, and 164 incoming Rocky Hill High students.

Chairman Szeps asked how Rocky Hill compared to its ERG; Mrs. Boutilier said she would check into that, and present data to the Board. Mrs. Bell asked her to find out if the other districts in the ERG included Vo-Ag and Vinal Tech.

**14. Early Dismissal Schedule**

**Moved by Mrs. Lionetti, seconded by Mrs. Vargas, to approve the revised early dismissal policy as submitted.**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

Mrs. Boutilier noted there had been concerns raised about the existing early dismissal schedule, particularly with the safety of the elementary school students being dismissed at 1:55 p.m. Although the school day would be shortened, it would still be within the guidelines. The policy would go into the student handbooks. Administration would send a notice home at the beginning of the school year and put in on the website.

**15. High School Calendar of Events**

The Board members had received the high school calendar of events for their information.

Chairman Szeps noted the next Board meeting to be held on August 21. The first day of school was scheduled for September 2. September 4 and September 18 were Board meetings. He noted the golf outing sponsored by the Rocky Hill Public Schools Education Foundation and the Chamber of Commerce scheduled for Friday, September 19 at Timberlin Golf Club in Kensington.

**16. Executive Session**

The Executive Session was not held.

**Moved by Ms. Vargas, seconded by Mrs. Tirillo, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.**

**Town of Rocky Hill  
Board of Education  
July 17, 2003  
Page 9**

**FAVOR: ALL  
MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie W. O'Neill  
Recording Secretary

Accepted by: \_\_\_\_\_