

Riverview School District
Study Session Minutes for May 14, 2012
7:00—9:30 p.m.

Present: Lisa Ashbaugh, Heidi Dolan, John Hackworth, Arlene Loeffler, Maureen McClure, Ernie Tillman, Dori Tompa, Lois Vitti, Mike McNally—REA President, Jay Moser, Tiffany Nix, Jason Shoaf, Frank Thompson, Susan Wiegand and Chuck Erdeljac **Absent:** David Kadylak

Citizens Present: Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Portera, Mr. Stolish, Mrs. Tsambis, and Tim Mobley—“The Patch”

Dr. Erdeljac welcomed everyone and reminded citizens that this is a working session of the Board to review potential motions for the public voting meeting on May 21st.

Dr. Erdeljac reviewed the budget questions that must be decided by mid-June. Mr. Thompson has placed \$80,000 from the fund balance in the revenue budget for new band uniforms. This is essentially an \$8,000 expenditure over ten years, since this is the life of band uniforms. Next, Mr. Thompson reviewed the RSD Proposed Preliminary Budget, which will be voted on at the May 21, 2012 public meeting. Mrs. Collins, a Tenth St. School parent, expressed her concerns about losing a school nurse. She emphasized that many children at Tenth St. School have medical and prescription needs that must be addressed daily by the nurse. Mr. Hackworth explained that RSD can meet those needs with a RN who serves in a paraprofessional role. Mr. Thompson explained that our enrollment in RSD and the private schools served by the RSD School Nurse next year will be around 1,380, well under the 1500 to 1 student to nurse ration requiring a second certified school nurse according to PA regulations. Mr. Hackworth explained that RSD is trying to find a way to meet its personnel needs during these economic times, and this may require some give and take. A Public Hearing on the RSD Proposed Budget for 2012-13 will be held on June 4th at 7:00 p.m. in the Central Office conference room at 701 Tenth St.

Mrs. Dolan reminded us that our needs in the guidance department are also being examined. Dr. Erdeljac stated that the need for the second special education teacher to replace Maria Hocanson, who resigned in February, remains a top priority at Verner Elementary School. He also emphasized that the needs of children and young adults today require the support of our guidance counselors. These needs are the first priorities in the budget discussion. Dr. Erdeljac further indicated that Mr. Zolkowski, Tenth St. Elementary Principal, indicated he may not need a third first grade teacher for next year, since average class sizes currently stand at 19 and 18 in first grade at Tenth St. for next year. Both Mrs. Portera and Mrs. Tsambis urged the Board to consider the needs of students, in addition to simply looking at class size numbers. Teachers must be able to teach the students entrusted to them. The RSD Preliminary Budget will be examined over the next month regarding these personnel matters, along with the technology budget, a third Verner custodian and the cost of AP Exam fees.

Dr. Erdeljac mentioned that Mr. Thompson is preparing to publish bid specifications for other capital improvement projects, such as the JSHS walk-in cooler/freezer unit, replacement JSHS windows for the remaining 1976 windows on the park and river sides of the JSHS, JSHS hallway carpeting, and Verner

classroom doors. This is the only way to determine the actual costs of these projects through the competitive bidding process required for any project over \$10,000. Gates will be added to the Tenth St. School playground (\$3,100) and essential repairs made to broken sidewalk concrete (\$9,900).

Mr. Thompson explained that a motion will be introduced at the June meeting regarding the RSD Homestead Resolution, since we must know the millage, in order to calculate accurate figures.

Mrs. Vitti and Mr. Thompson reviewed the Eastern Area School resolutions related to an energy savings program to fund a new roof and other energy improvements. RSD will contribute \$4,126.10/year for twenty (20) years. Dr. Erdeljac advised that the Board will also vote on the Renewal Agreement to remain a member of the consortium for the Eastern Area Special School. Next, Mr. Thompson and Dr. Loeffler reviewed the proposed Forbes Road Technical and Career Center budget for 2012-13. The Board will vote on a motion to approve this budget. Mr. Thompson added that the Board will also be asked to approve the AIU Special Services Agreement for 2012-13, along with the AIU Special Education Policies and IDEA pass-through funds for 2012-13.

A motion will be introduced to approve the lowest, responsible bids for consumable supplies for art, physical education and custodial supplies. RSD is involved in consortium purchasing for paper.

The Board members then spent considerable time expressing their individual positions regarding the administrative recommendation made by Mr. Moser on April 30th to continue using CMP2 and Discovering Math, while also having our math teachers identify supplemental instructional materials to provide a balanced math program that includes both math procedures and math reasoning. Mr. Hackworth provided a chart that summarized the Penn State study (March 2012) of CMP2 in sixth grade among 65 schools and 5,600. "Grade 6 mathematics students in schools using CMP2 performed no better or worse on a standardized test than did their peers in schools not using it." Mr. Tillman stated his opposition to our continued use of CMP2 and Discovering Math. He expressed concerns that we will find ourselves in the same place this time next year. Other Board members expressed their support for the recommendation, since it has the support of our secondary math teachers and emphasizes a balanced approach to teaching and learning mathematics. Dr. McClure expressed that she remains conflicted about this matter and recently sought input for understanding from a university colleague well-versed in the math instructional dilemma that has been going on since the 1950's. Do we teach math reasoning and applications that lead to mastery of math procedures and skills, or do we teach the skills and procedures that lead to the application and reasoning? Mr. McNally informed the Board that the same evolution occurred in science education ten years ago with the emphasis on inquiry based, hands-on science units. He mentioned that our science teachers arrived at a balanced approach between inquiry-based and direct instructional practices. Mr. Stolish, a concerned parent, advocated that RSD adopt a math program that meets the needs of its college-bound students. He emphasized that RSD is too small to offer multiple approaches and programs, so we need to meet the needs of the preponderance of our students. The Board will vote on a motion regarding the math recommendation on May 21st.

The Board will also vote on the adoption of the biology text Campbell Biology as recommended by the administration.

The Board also reviewed the summer programs and personnel for this upcoming summer. Mrs. Dolan inquired about the extent and cost of the ESY program. Mrs. Wiegand explained that RSD is required by federal law to offer ESY to students who have this program listed in their IEP.

The Board also plans to introduce motions related to important personnel matters, including Supplemental Contract Positions for 2012-13, MAT interns for 2012-13, a guidance intern for first semester at the JSHS, contracted service approvals for the Athletic Director (Bob Kariotis), Auditorium Managers (Tom Ketterer and Stacey Galata) and RSD Webmaster (Elissa Miller).

There is no update from the TIF Study Committee as of May 14, 2012.

The Board will vote on the SECOND reading of proposed new RSD Policies developed through the PSBA Policy Services Division and Andrew Christ, Esquire. The Board will also approve the RSD Student Code of Conduct as the Code of Student Conduct referenced in new RSD Policy 218: Student Discipline. In addition, the Board will vote on a motion to approve Administrative Guidelines & Procedures that accompany several of the new policies.

The Board will vote on a motion to approve the RSD Football Booster Organization as a recognized RSD Booster group. Finally, Mr. Moser provided an update on the athletic storage addition at the JSHS and indicated progress is going well, but water has been discovered in the underground electrical storage area. Duquesne Light Co. has been notified.

Dr. Erdeljac stated that our Solicitor Mr. Clair has not yet responded to our questions about inviting parents of sixth graders from Tenth St. School next year to consider having their sixth graders attend Verner Elementary school on a voluntary basis next year, in order to address their concerns about class size in sixth grade at Tenth St. School next year. Mr. Shoaf has indicated he could accommodate up to six students in his sixth grade next year.

Respectfully, submitted,

Charles Erdeljac, Superintendent