

**RYE SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
School Administrative Unit 50  
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*To be approved by the Rye School Board at the September 16, 2020 meeting.*

**RYE SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**RYE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

A meeting of the School Board of the Rye School District was held at Rye Junior High School and available through Live Streaming on Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:**

School Board Members: Margaret Honda, Jeanne Moynahan,  
Matt Curtin, Scott Marion, Heather Reed

Administrators: Salvatore Petralia, Superintendent  
Kelly Killen, Assistant Superintendent  
Maria Soucy, Principal  
Suzanne Lull, Principal

Visitors:

**CALL TO ORDER (:57)**

Ms. Honda called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Honda acknowledged the passing of Rus Wilson, the Athletic Director for Portsmouth High School, sent condolences to his family and asked for a moment of silence.

Ms. Honda highlighted the agenda items for the meeting.

Mr. Petralia explained that he did not have an official report but would have points to make on several agenda items and asked the Board for a non-public session at the conclusion of the meeting.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS (4:11)**

**School Re-opening Plan/Items**

Ms. Lull updated the Board on student numbers which increased by 20 new students. She noted that enrollment is close to full. Ms. Lull reviewed the number of students per grade.

Ms. Lull thanked Peter Boyd and Makerspace for face shields and mask extenders, the Conway family for pizza lunch, Maly and L'Ecuyer family for breakfast, Starbucks for coffee and pastries, the Rye School Board for Lil's Cruellers, and REF for the UV wands for both Schools.

Ms. Lull reviewed meetings, communications and Open House dates at the Elementary.

Mr. Curtin asked for additional information on the 20 new students. Ms. Lull noted some were new to Rye through rentals or building homes.

Mr. Petralia explained that Rye Junior High had an additional 10 students not part of the survey for the buses. Ms. Soucy said they had 15 more students.

Mr. Petralia noted that Ms. Papoutsy had a question regarding coverage for staff absences within the plan.

Ms. Soucy expressed that the teachers had been working in teams and individually. Ms. Soucy noted that grade level videos regarding protocol would be sent out. Ms. Soucy explained that they had spent time working with modern classroom and safety training.

Ms. Honda asked about technology. Ms. Soucy explained that they were in the process of checking connections and technology.

Ms. Lull noted that they were waiting on chrome books that were back ordered for the kindergartens.

Mr. Curtin clarified that the Open Houses were for new students only. Ms. Soucy mentioned that the 5th Grade had an Open House that went well.

Ms. Lull noted that the Staff was very positive.

Mr. Petralia said that throughout the District the Staff had shown great energy and positive attitudes.

Mr. Petralia reviewed the schedules for other Districts. Mr. Petralia added that New Castle had several applications for families to tuition into the school.

Ms. Reed asked if the process for the Unified Arts had been resolved.

Ms. Soucy explained that the students would be rotating through P.E., Library, Life Skills, and STEAM each quarter, General Music would happen Monday through Thursday, Band would occur on Friday and World Language would be remote.

Ms. Lull explained that at the Elementary, one UA teacher would be in the building while the others would be remote and the students would be on a 3 to 4 week rotation.

Dr. Marion asked how arranging students with friends worked at the Junior High. Ms. Soucy explained that they did take requests and tried hard to place students with at least one friend. Ms. Lull noted that they were able to place most students with a friend.

Ms. Honda read Ms. Papoutsy public comments including a thank you to everyone for working so hard to open the schools while keeping the staff and students safe. Ms. Honda continued to review Ms. Papoutsy's questions regarding the lack of steps for substitute options in cases of several staff absences, her concerns regarding safety, if pods had to be mixed, to provide the staff coverage.

Ms. Lull said pods would never be mixed and in the event they could not find enough substitutes or para-educators to cover absent staff, they would pull staff from other disciplines or even from the administrative office. Ms. Soucy mentioned that given how they organized the staff and students, which half the staff could be out and they would still be covered.

Dr. Marion noted the public could certainly make suggestions for solving the issue.

Mr. Petralia reviewed the process for covering staff and noted that they had a list of 20 substitutes to call on.

### **Social Emotional Learning (23:50)**

Ms. Killen explained that Social Emotional Learning was more than a curriculum and the planned curriculum would not be implemented until about November. Ms. Killen reviewed the implementation plan they were going to follow.

Ms. Killen said she was working on a more detailed plan and reviewed the areas of self-regulating, self-care for staff, how they would communicate to parents, and create an equitable learning environment for social and emotional development. Ms. Killen noted that the detail, activities, and meetings regarding the plan would be reviewed at the next meeting.

Dr. Marion said he liked the ideas but recommended deferring adoption for a year while they explore and work through the plan.

Ms. Killen reviewed some of the training they would provide for the plan.

### **Social Contract (32:28)**

Dr. Marion explained that they cleaned up some wording.

Mr. Curtin reviewed the travel restriction section. The Board discussed the CDC guidelines, holidays and vacation.

Mr. Curtin suggested combining holidays, weekend, and vacation into one category.

Ms. Honda said that Mr. Petralia would forward the social contract and health form with other details.

Mr. Petralia mentioned that 36% of the Districts were in person, 42 % were Hybrid, 17% were remote and 5% undecided.

Dr. Marion asked if last year's testing was being required. Ms. Killen confirmed it was but mentioned there had been some push back on that. Dr. Marion said it could not be required. Ms. Killen said it wasn't happening right now and there were discussions on going.

Ms. Honda asked about a parent's Back to School Night and Ms. Lull said they would find a creative solution for presenting. Ms. Soucy said they were looking at the first week in October.

### **Rye Recreation Agreement (43:30)**

Ms. Lull explained that they would be evaluating after September.

### **AREA Agreement (44:02)**

Ms. Honda explained that there had been discussions to review the AREA Agreement between Rye and Portsmouth, for the High School Students.

Mr. Curtin asked if Mr. Petralia was able to review the summary he created. Mr. Petralia confirmed that he had.

Mr. Petralia noted scheduling the Secondary Advisory committee meeting for Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at Portsmouth High School.

Mr. Curtin asked if the meetings were public and who would attend. Mr. Petralia confirmed that the meetings were public and explained that typically a Board member from the Districts attended and the Boards contributed agenda items.

Ms. Honda asked about the Portsmouth Board representation at that meeting. Mr. Petralia said the Board Chair typically attended but noted that there had been some transition.

Ms. Honda expressed the importance of having a Portsmouth board member at the meetings to have dialogue.

Ms. Honda mentioned that after reviewing the original documentation, there could be modifications made to the agreement.

Dr. Marion said they would need to call a special meeting to discuss and vote on changes.

Dr. Marion mentioned that the agreement required approval from the voters of each town, which had never happened with the original AREA Agreement. Dr. Marion explained that the tuition amount was dependent on the State's approval. Dr. Marion explained that it was worth checking into who decided whether Rye could have a vote or not.

Mr. Petralia suggested requesting that the AREA Agreement be added to the agenda to be discussed and then kept as a standing item on the agenda. Mr. Petralia said the Sub-Committee needed to be reorganized.

Ms. Honda re-empathized the need to have a Portsmouth Board Member at the meeting.

Ms. Moynahan explained that the AREA agreement was actually voted on by the Town but the Lister Agreement had not been.

Mr. Curtin confirmed that the Lister issue was resolved.

Ms. Curtin noted that the agreement mentioned that one Board Member would be elected to represent the area towns but said that the document did not state that the position was a non-voting seat.

Ms. Honda said the Portsmouth city manifest dictates operations and voting.

Mr. Petralia and Dr. Marion noted how they had a student representative on the Board which was a non-voting seat.

Ms. Honda noted that adding the ability to vote would provide the District with a voice.

Ms. Moynahan reviewed a case of a previous SAU 50 Joint Board Member, who owned property in Portsmouth, but was still not able to vote.

Mr. Curtin asked if amendments to the agreement required a unanimous approval from the Towns as well as the SAU 52.

Mr. Curtin noted that he didn't have an amendment to propose but wanted a better understanding of the process so he could answer any questions on it. Mr. Curtin briefly mentioned the tuition section and average daily membership.

Ms. Moynahan reviewed a section from the 1993 clarification unit, regarding holding School District Meetings. Ms. Moynahan said it needed to be modified because it stated that the District's Annual Meeting should occur between March 1st and March 25th and must include the adoption of a budget.

Ms. Moynahan and Mr. Petralia discussed the Districts, deliberative sessions and the annual meetings. Mr. Petralia noted that it needed to be changed.

Mr. Curtin said that if amendments required unanimous approval, then that policy would be applied to not just adding amendments but also removing amendments. Ms. Curtin mentioned how the Board was advised, in the past, to avoid negotiating the agreement, due to possible risk of losing a good tuition rate or benefits. Mr. Curtin explained that the wording confirmed that Portsmouth could not change the agreement without everyone's approval, thus opening up discussion over the agreement would not be risky.

The Board discussed the negotiation process.

Mr. Curtin noted that previous modifications appeared to relate only to the tuition rate and not a voting position.

Dr. Marion mentioned the history of getting a long term tuition rate for a school near the community.

Mr. Petralia said that based on June 30, 2020 numbers, the SAU made up 36.9% of the population.

Ms. Honda asked the Board to review the meeting dates and consider volunteering to attend the meetings.

Dr. Marion reviewed the history of rotating the representative at the meeting between the SAU 50 Boards

Ms. Honda explained that there needed to be a transfer of information from the meeting, back to the Boards. Dr. Marion suggested distributing the minutes.

Mr. Curtin asked if the summary of the AREA agreement was public and the Board confirmed it was.

Ms. Reed asked about the tents. Mr. Petralia explained that the original tent company couldn't provide tents and they shifted to another vendor and the tents would arrive in October.

### **POLICY (1:09:55)**

Mr. Petralia explained that Attorney Philip's sent sections D, E, and F with summaries.

Ms. Moynahan explained that there would be a Policy Meeting on September 22, 2020.

Ms. Honda reviewed the work done to investigate the wording and legal definition of truancy.

Dr. Marion suggested reviewing the DOE truancy during the time of remote instruction.

Dr. Marion reviewed a section regarding marking students as absent if there had been no engagement. Dr. Marion questioned what the definition of engagement was and noted that there needed to be clear requirement outlined on what engagement included.

Ms. Killen noted that the Plan described what counted as attendance.

Dr. Marion reviewed an example of being present at a meeting but not turning in an assignment. Dr. Marion mentioned that there were stringent sanctions.

Ms. Reed asked if Dr. Marion was referring to the Department of Education.

Dr. Marion explained that the State did not define engagement.

Ms. Reed wondered if there were an update with more specifics.

Ms. Killen said she guessed something would be coming soon since so many were remote.

Dr. Marion expressed the need to investigate more before adopting the policy.

Ms. Honda asked what needed to be addressed. Dr. Marion asked if the remote policy was separate.

Ms. Moynahan explained that there was a truancy policy but suggested the separate policy for remote would be good to have.

Mr. Curtin asked what VLACS would do regarding engagement. Ms. Reed said their policy was for full time students. Ms. Killen explained how their pacing systems worked.

Ms. Reed said VLACS was very different and it didn't transfer to the school's situation.

Ms. Killen explained that this came up in Spring 2019, as they struggled with wanting to clean up the policies. Ms. Killen reviewed what other Districts were following and explained that they looked at how to address patterns of absences and address trips and educational travel. Ms. Killen reviewed having alternative learning plans to help administrators and explained there was an order and process for education during travel.

Ms. Killen mentioned the intervention process and desire to address situations depending of frequency and other factors.

Mr. Curtin expressed that the policy seemed wordy but understood some of the reasoning now. Mr. Curtin and Dr. Marion discussed the wording. Ms. Moynahan suggested a change.

Dr. Marion mentioned that the wording regarding absences was not clear enough. Ms. Killen reviewed the requirements for an excused absence. Dr. Marion said those specifics should be added and suggested some wording.

The Board discussed the definitions for truancy and if the policy was required. Dr. Marion mentioned the number of days and reviewed the progressive process.

Ms. Killen explained how the absences could contribute to special education needs. The Board discussed this issue.

Ms. Killen reviewed the desire for intervention at different levels and it's relation to absences.

Ms. Honda summarized that the Board was not ready to adopt and highlighted changes desired.

Mr. Curtin said that there are other policies that govern abuse and/or neglect and administration would review other triggers that contribute before absences.

Dr. Marion offered to assist with changes. Ms. Killen said she would work on changes.

Ms. Moynahan noted needing changes to policies if possible before the Policy Meeting on September 22, 2020.

Mr. Petralia mentioned having the Attorney review.

**PUBLIC COMMENT (1:43:42)**

Ms. Honda read a comment from Amber Tinnen, a mother of an incoming 5th Grader learning remotely, asked if items needed to be picked up at the school, were all the items on the supply list needed and was Google meets being used.

Ms. Honda said Ms. Soucy was sending out a communication including material pick up information and there was a teacher dedicated to the remote student.

Ms. Moynahan asked if there were Manifests to sign. *\* there were none to sign.*

Mr. Curtin said the return to School website was up and acknowledged Ms. Reed and Ms. Honda for their work. Mr. Curtin asked about links.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION (1:37:44 )**

*Ms. Moynhan made a motion, seconded by Dr. Marion to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A, II (e), for purposes of negotiation strategy. Roll Call: 5-0*


**RE-ENTER INTO PUBLIC SESSION**

*Ms. Moynahan made a motion, seconded by Dr. Marion to enter back into public session and seal the non-public minutes at 6:47 p.m. Roll Call: 5-0*

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Ms. Honda made a motion, seconded by Mr. Curtin to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 p.m. Roll Call: 5-0*

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Samantha Panek  
September 9, 2020*

  
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Matt Curtin, Secretary

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Date *9/16/2020*