MEETING MINUTES – FY2014
School Committee Meeting

NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT: Rowe NAME OF COMMITTEE: Rowe School Committee

DATE AND LOCATION OF MEETING: Monday, June 23, 2014 – 5:30PM, Rowe Town Hall

PRESENT: Lisa Danek-Burke (LDB), Lisa Miller (LM) and Susie Zavotka (SZ)

Audience Members: Supt. Jon Lev (JL), Principal Bill Knittle (BK), Director of PPS Leann Loomis (LL), Director of PPS Deb Rosselli (DR), Ellen Miller (EM) SchCom secretary, Cindy Laffond and Rosie Gordon

I. **Call to Order**: At 5:42pm the School Committee came out of Executive Session and Chair Lisa Danek-Burke called the open session to order.

II. **Minutes:** At the request of LDB the minutes of the May 29 and June 4 meetings were tabled. In order to shorten the length of the minutes, she will email red-lined versions with strikeouts to the committee members for discussion at the next meeting. Minutes of the June 10 meeting were not addressed.

III. **Audience:** No comments

IV. **Action Items:**

- **Administer PARCC or MCAS in the spring of 2015:** DESE has given school districts the option to choose to administer PARCC testing next spring rather than MCAS. JL attended a training session last week put on by DESE. After this year the state will be doing something different from MCAS (it may be PARCC, or something very similar). Next year PARCC will be a no-fault test, which will provide beneficial practice. Training sessions will be provided throughout the year for teachers and administrators. PARCC can be done with paper and pencil or online. June 30th is the deadline to choose to switch to PARCC to be guaranteed entry into the system. An important factor is that PARCC is aligned to Common Core—MCAS is not. All schools will need to eventually move to PARCC or similar testing, and moving now gives the school a year of practice. JL is recommending to his other schools to switch to PARCC for next year. BK agreed that having a practice year will be beneficial. LM made a motion to administer PARCC in the spring of 2015. SZ seconded the motion and it passed unanimously (3/0/0). JL stated he needs to send the meeting minutes indicating this vote to DESE. *[PARCC: The **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers** creating a standard set of K-12 assessments in math and English.]*
- **Meeting Calendar:** LDB presented a proposed meeting calendar for FY2015 with meetings to be held the fourth Monday each month at 5:30pm. Some dates that may change are Monday, May 11th (annual town meeting [ATM] date) and Monday, May 25th (Memorial Day holiday). JL stated that the Florida SchCom meeting is usually the 2nd Monday each month. He will change that meeting so he can attend the Rowe ATM. SZ made a motion to accept the 2014-2015 meeting calendar as presented. LM seconded the motion. The motion to accept the 2014-2015 meeting calendar as presented passed unanimously (3/0/0). LM did state that she will not be able to attend the July 28th.
- **Budget Transfer:** A budget transfer request was submitted to move $23,247 from Building Rental to Teachers' Salaries $14,470 and Tuition-Franklin County Tech School $8,777. There is still a question about a FCTS tuition charge as it is unknown what student this is for. The tuition has already been paid. If it turns out it is not a proper charge to the Town of Rowe, FCTS can refund the town. LL stated it may also include some Sped tuition. LDB stated the transfer into Teachers' Salaries will allow us to shift some School Choice funds used for salaries to the salaries line so that we will have more School Choice funds to carryover to next year. LM made a motion to transfer $23,247 from Building Rental to Teachers' Salaries $14,470 and Tuition FCTS $8,777. SZ seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous (3/0/0). LDB will work with LL to follow-up on the tuition verification. LDB and BK signed the budget transfer request form. LL will bring it to

Mohawk CO.

- **Purchase Requisitions:** None

V. **Principal's Report:** BK presented his monthly report.

- Finished year-long study of writing. Looking forward to getting into this further next year.
- 6th grade graduation at Pelham Lake Park on June 18th was very nice. Would like to continue holding the ceremony at the lake in the future, as long as it is not raining. LDB asked BK to express to the teachers the amazing job they did bringing food to the ceremony. BK stated that starting next year they'll have 5th grade parents bring the food. A planning meeting will be held in April.
- The classrooms have been packed up and movers will be at the school tomorrow. Items will be stored in storage unit(s) near the town garage. When building is ready the movers will unpack the unit(s), moving items to their appropriate locations in the new building. This is all being covered by insurance funds.
- Professional Development days tomorrow and Wednesday, paid for by grants.
- First day of school for 2014-2015 year will be Wednesday, August 27th.

VI. **Report of the Chairperson:**

a) **Missing Meeting Minutes:** LDB stated that minutes of the following meetings are missing. LDB asked LM to research this, and thought that perhaps Paul McLatchy may have recordings for some of these meetings. LM will look through her files and work with EM on this.

8/15/2012	10/30/2012
9/19/2012	11/09/2012
9/27/2012	1/29/2013

b) **Out-of-State (OOS) Students:** JL stated that he found an agreement that Mt. Greylock uses for students from Hancock and Ashford that they also use for OOS students. Their FY2015 tuition will be $11,910 for regular ed and $12,409 for Sped. He stated that tuition is set by the School Committee, and the committee can even decide to not charge tuition. LM stated when this was first looked at two years ago it was discussed that perhaps $5K be used (same as school choice), plus Sped costs. JL stated that using the School Choice policy may be a good choice, and you could use the MA Sped increment formula for Sped costs. DR stated that you would always have a placement meeting ahead of time. An evaluation should be completed ahead of time. For an OOS student the parents may need to provide/pay for this. JL suggested that that perhaps all OOS students should be handled on a case-by-case basis, with an agreement with the parents/guardians for each individual case. Firstly, it was agreed that a formal written request needs to be obtained from the parents for the current matter at hand concerning two 3rd graders from Vermont wanting to attend Rowe School this fall. (Rowe School is one option that this family is looking at.) BK will speak to the family and let them know that perhaps it would be the school choice amount plus Sped costs. If they are serious about pursuing this he will obtain a written request from the family and will forward it to JL. LL suggested that the attorney be asked if the principal/superintendent/Sped director can be allowed to review students' records to make recommendations to the school committee, without violating the students' rights. JL will contact Russell Dupere to discuss the OOS tuition matter. A decision should be made at the July 28th meeting.

VII. **Superintendent's Report:**

a) **Propane Procurement:** SZ reported that Dan Pallotta decided to have the tanks filled and paid for with construction project funds. The company that installed the tanks recently came and filled the tanks, matching the low bid price that Mike Delvecchio had gotten this spring. SZ said that we still need to lock in a contract for the coming heating season. JL stated that he will have Carrie Garivaltis (CG) obtain propane bid prices.

b) **PARCC:** Done (see action item above)

c) **Transition to NBSU:**

1. **Purchase Orders:** CG is looking into setting up purchase orders in QuickBooks and is working with BK and Laurie Laffond on this.

2. **Water Testing:** Ronna (NBSU secretary) is working with Housatonic Basin Sampling & Testing (HBST) of Lee MA to set up a testing schedule for the Rowe School public water supply (PWS). SZ stated that the initial testing needs to be done soon. JL will get this set up and will email the information to Mike Delvecchio. JL will have HBST bill the Rowe Board of Health for water testing, as is the practice for all town buildings.
3. **E-Rate:** Ronna has made contact with both O'Neal and E-Rate Online. It appears E-rate Online would be an initial fee of $5K; whereas, it looks like O'Neal takes a certain percentage of the savings and sends a check to the school for the remainder. Will have more information for the next meeting. LDB mentioned that we still have a credit with Crocker Communications for about $900. She wants to make sure that we use this for future invoices from Crocker, or that at least the money does come back to the town.
4. **End of Year/FY2015 budget/grants:** JL and CG are meeting with BK and Laurie Laffond on Wednesday afternoon to go over these items. They want to get a good handle on finances for the July 28th meeting. CG has spoken with JB to get the end of year reporting done. CG said it is going smoothly so far. She will be meeting with Janice and Jackie at the town hall to go over year end procedures and reconciliation.
5. **Letters of Assurance/Contracts:** These documents were given to BK and were handed out by the end of the school year. The non-union staff were given a 2.5% raise. LDB stated that the FY2015 pay increases for non-union staff had not been set yet. In the recent past the non-union staff has gotten the same increase as the union staff. BK and JL will work together on letters to the non-union staff stating that the wage percent increase has in fact not been set yet. LDB stated that the town employees are receiving a 1.5% COLA for FY2015.
6. **Custodian:** Tim Schramel will be working at Hawlemont cleaning up the rooms that Rowe used.
7. **PowerSchool vs. Rediker:** BK is still awaiting exact quotes from both.
8. **SchoolReach:** Cost will be $695, but there is not a line item for that in the budget.
9. **Destiny:** Getting quote from them this week. Currently $700. It shouldn't be much more.
10. **Extra FY2015 funds:** If BK/JL find available funds in the budget, they will make recommendations for use of those funds.
11. **NEWA:** Price is $3500 for testing ($1600) and training ($1900). Thereafter will only have to pay for the testing each year.
12. **NutriKids:** JL doesn't think this will be necessary. The cafeteria managers will meet and discuss this. CG takes care of the reporting requirements.
13. **MASC:** LDB still working on getting the fee for this. LM stated that perhaps we can forego this for a year or so. JL stated that the other NBSU schools are not members, but they still receive MASC mailings and emails. You can still attend their trainings and programs. LDB will get information from Glenn Koocher as to what they provide.
14. **Minutes/Agendas/etc:** JL does minutes for two of the school committees; principal does minutes for the other school committee. JL will prepare Rowe packets and agendas. He was asked to continue placing "audience comments" at the beginning and end of each agenda. LM asked that teachers/staff also be included in the comment section. JL did ask that when anyone wants to be on the agenda that they let him know. If they are not on the agenda then the committee does not need to respond.

VIII. **Financial Information - FY2014 Operating Statement and Expense Report dated 5-31-14:** Same reports as submitted at last meeting. LDB reported that JB had met with CG and it went well. JB will be uploading files into Excel so CG can finish up FY2014. There has been an issue in getting deposit/receipt reconciliation information from the town/FRCOG. They also don't have a good idea on what's been reconciled in the fire account.

IX. **School Building Update:** SZ reported that painting is just about done. They're working on wainscoting in the hallways. The outside is pretty well finished. Blacktop and granite curbs have been installed. Grass has been planted. Making good progress; still on schedule. Will begin installation of cabinets this week. LDB said she was impressed with the level of the mechanical systems installed.

X. **New Business**:

a) **Annual Appointments:** SZ stated that she received a call from Selectman Walt Quist who is working on the 50 or so annual appointments the selectmen make. He asked about the appointment of the town's representative to the Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Fund Committee (they give scholarships to graduating seniors), and the appointment of the town's representative to the Mohawk Municipal Advisory Committee (MMAC). Both of these committees are made up of representatives from each of the nine "Mohawk" towns. The rep to the Nilman fund committee should not be a parent of a graduating senior, and usually the MMAC rep is a selectman, but can also be their designee. SZ will inform Walt that this is not something the School Committee is responsible for or gives input on.

b) **Formal Thank You:** SZ recommended that Mohawk central office or central office staff individually get formal thank you letters from the Rowe school committee. Everyone agreed that this would be appropriate. LDB did state that she plans to go to the Mohawk school committee meetings as often as she can. She did send something to MB that she asked him to read stating that she would be attending meetings and looked forward to working with them—but it was not a thank you letter. SZ will work on a draft letter and present it at the next meeting. SZ said she would like to attend the Mohawk meetings also, and that if LDB was not able to attend a particular meeting to let her know and so she can make it a point to attend.

c) **NBSU School Committee meetings:** JL stated that they have a fall union meeting in October and one in May, and rotate the location between the towns. With Rowe there will now be 15 members. JL thinks that one of next year's two meetings should be held in Rowe, especially with the new school.

d) **Get-together/Open House:** JL hopes that right at the beginning of the school year a get-together can be held—perhaps at the lake—and teachers/staff and school committees of the other three schools be invited. Perhaps parents also. Or perhaps the get-together could happen at an open house at the beginning of the school year. Everyone agreed this is a great idea. BK stated that the Rowe staff is especially interested in getting to know their colleagues.

e) **Opening Day:** DR stated that on the 1st day for teachers (before the 1st day for students) they take care of disseminating compliance information and getting required forms/attendance sheets filled out. This is a time saver. JL will speak with BK about implementing this at Rowe.

f) **School Choice Parents:** LM asked that a special effort be made to include school choice parents in events and communications.

g) **Correspondence/Handouts:** See list below.

h) **Audience of Citizens:** None

i) **Next Meeting:** Next regular meeting is Monday, July 28th at 5:30pm at the Rowe town hall.

j) **Adjournment:** At 7:46pm LM made a motion to adjourn the meeting. SZ seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously (3/0/0).

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Miller,

Signature: _____
Lisa Danek-Burke, Chair

Date Approved: 7-28-14

Meeting Packet/Handouts:

- Agenda

- Minutes: May 29, June 4
- School Committee 2014-2015 meeting calendar
- Budget Transfer request $23,247
- Principal's Report dated 6-23-2014
- FY2014 Operating Statement as of 5-31-2014
- FY2014 Expense Report as of 5-31-2014
- Recorder article 6-11-2014: *"Rowe School moves ahead with Berkshires superintendent"*

Mohawk School District

Dear

Mohawk School District has been an integral part of Rowe Elementary School's history and development. While we have chosen to go with a smaller, less involved administrative style, we wanted you to know that we have appreciated the fine services that have been provided to our teachers, staff, and parents. Further, we are grateful for your support during this transitional time and willingness to work with us in sharing part time faculty and staff services.

As an independent elementary school, we recognize the value of a shared relationship with other elementary schools in the area and expect to continue those relationships. The partnerships that teachers, staff, and parents have developed with elementary schools in the Mohawk Central District continue to be important. It is our intention to put in place initiatives that continue to foster those affiliations.

We look forward to a continuing relationship with you through the Middle and High School Programs.

Sincerely,

Rowe School Committee