

Date: 6/16/99
To: Members, Board of Education
From: Chris Manaseri
Subject: Backup for June 22 Meeting

Friday brings the last CSO meeting of the year, so I'm starting your packet early this week - Wednesday morning. The danger in so doing is that things change. Please bear with me if they do...

NON AGENDA ITEMS:

1.0 End of Year breakfast is scheduled for 8:00 Friday morning the 25th. Sharon Jensen and crew will make sure we close the school year in style, and we will plan on some seniority pins, etc., to be given out as in the past. Each of you is welcome to attend, and maybe even to say a word or two if you wish (Mike did this last year on behalf of the Board and it was very well received, I believe.) Staff like to know that the Board feels proud of them and their hard work, and nobody says that better than the Board members themselves. Please consider your own schedules if you can make it early. All the words will be done by 9:00 and people will be on their way to closing up classrooms, preparing for summer school etc. . Staff will not be leaving until 11:30 - FYI, for the accountability mavens among you (fairly typical of schools).

2.0 Capital Project final approval still has not come through. Every day I watch the mail for it, as it will make for exciting times come July and August, especially if we can get started on some of our work before school is out. Got my first call from a potential bidder last week, so the word is out that we will be doing work soon.

3.0 CBO is getting down to the nitty-gritty. I visited the site with Terry yesterday to try to allay some of Bonnie's concerns for floor space issues. The superintendents will be meeting with the implementation team at the site on Monday the 21st, so I will have more for you in the way of update on developments in time for the meeting Tuesday. Bonnie has several concerns about her office being the smallest and not being the way it was sketched out two months ago. My major concern is that the work flow has not yet been clarified to the point that two people are doing three school's work in payroll, two in accounting, etc... I'm afraid that we are taking the coward's way out and trying to move everybody into the space first, let them continue to do their own thing only, and then work out the kinks afterward. Most likely to get shortchanged in that is Seneca Falls, who's not sending all their folks. Most likely to be unhappy with the switch of job duties when everything catches up to them are the people from Romulus and Waterloo. My read is that there will be some rough times ahead yet, so it is important for the captains to know and stay the course.

4.0 Computer install update says they are sending the "termination crew" (ominous as that sounds) to RCS on June 24, to cap the wires that will presumably be all in place by then. Then BOCES shifts everybody to Y2K compliance for the first few weeks of July across their 49 schools served by EduTech from Batavia to Romulus. Our install has been moved back in their schedule to August 4 as of communication via Ray Fox this morning. If that's a hard date, we're still fine, and Ray and Karen Sabara along with Nancy Munn will give us a week after they're done to make sure everything is working okay. We do plan to use two hours on the opening day to bring people up to speed with the new screens they'll see in Windows 95 and Office 97, as well as to make sure everybody's ready to handle attendance and grades. NB- While we're pulling wire, we are also pulling cable TV access to each classroom as well - this through FLCable Vision and a deal Ray caught on to at a SysOp meeting.

5.0 Retirement Incentive is still not law, although everyone is waiting with baited breath on it. Much of the conversation we are likely to have regarding at least one agenda item is contingent upon there being an incentive and us getting at least two people on/with it - Marge

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Larrabee and Bobbie Nelson. I have been trying to keep those two abreast of any developments in Albany about this. Word is Senate has passed, Assembly yet to do so, and Governor anxious to sign as he proposed it. The interesting and troubling thing with these is that you sometimes get more than you expect. Marie Johnson is the recent recipient of the opportunity to revert back to Tier I, and she might be interested therefore in taking advantage of any incentive on top of that. We have at least two bus drivers who are old enough and might be interested. And who knows who might surprise us? (Superintendents are never eligible) This year you reinvested that savings into your capital project. Next year? We have at least two ideas... one involves a potential solution to your music dilemma discussed in exec last time and the other involves the RAITN room, the library (especially if Marie goes), and Ray Fox. (RAITN allows you to add a Technician at 80% FTE fully aidable, so that might be a way to elongate Ray's stay with us by providing some aidable extra help, especially if we need a new librarian in the RAITN area)

I am putting the potential incentive on the agenda in case we want to discuss it (without names) and in case we actually get any info on it before school is out next Friday. We are over-accrued in both ERS and TRS accounting, so we have the money to support an incentive if one is offered, and the administration has the desire to implement some changes. This could be good for us once again...

6.0 Rocketman update: There will be a Superintendent's Hearing held on Friday of this week to deal with the young man I emailed you about *last* Friday who has been suspended from school this week. I will formally conduct such a hearing, including asking the police officer who investigated the incident to serve as a district witness, in large part to impress upon this young man the importance of the actions he took and those we have taken against him. This is likely to be more a matter of a "for the record" hearing than an attempt to increase his suspension time beyond the five days Mike assigned. In case you missed the email - a 7th grader doctored his Technology class project CO2 rocket to try to make it explode when launched, and was caught despairing that it didn't. During the process, he refused to come clean to Mike, who called the police to have the boy spoken to by them. On site, they used their high-powered walkie talkies to trip our fire alarm inadvertently, causing the school to be evacuated in the middle of elementary lunch. Imagine poor Mike Karlsen picking up the scanner on his field radio, hearing the police get called to the school about an explosive device, then hearing the fire department get called to respond to our fire alarm and evacuation! All this on the last day of classes for the high school and right on top of a food fight during their lunch, with Barb out at one meeting and me not yet back from another. Welcome to the last day of school as a building administrator, Mike. Shall we take up a collection for a bottle of scotch?

7.0 Early Termination clause in the Superintendent's contract was discussed in exec last time. I have called Marc Reitz for some ideas, but he has not yet gotten back to me. We have time (you're all still on the Board until June 2001). Marc was a tad chagrined by the request as he wasn't sure whom I was asking him to represent in the research. You know how lawyers are- the truth is less important than the stance one takes on any issue, that being determined by who's paying the bill. Only one of the reasons I was never interested in becoming one of them.

8.0 FYI and paycheck memo two times ago - I do have some feedback from nine people about what they'd like to see in a "new" superintendent at RCS next year. I will share same with you as part of the **evaluation process** due in July. Also this time out, please find enclosed one of our handy-dandy evaluation forms for you to complete and return. Might be interesting to see what you have to say compared to some of the responses I received from staff. I also include your January feedback in case you want/need it. Please try to get to these this week so we can deal with feedback at reorg in July. Thanks.

9.0 Also FYI - I said no to the outgoing Commander, Don Olsen, to a request to loan and or rent "him" a 15 passenger bus for a church group to use to haul kids to North Carolina to build

houses for humanity this summer. I am uncomfortable with the church connection slightly, but even moreso with the distance away from home that one of our buses would travel without one of our drivers. I suggested actually renting such a beast from a local dealer instead.

10.0 New Commander, Lt. Col. Brian Frank, presumably the final commander of Seneca, will take charge across the street on July 8, 1999. The Lt. Colonel and his wife have five children who will be attending parochial schools in the area, and I assured her we would honor their tardy request for private school transportation given the circumstances. Commander Olsen and his kids have been extremely cooperative and good for the school during his/their time here, and he will be missed.

11.0 Prison Community Task Force meets Thursday night, and Tom and I may be able to tell you more about happenings there afterward.

12.0 Kidspace has been all quiet since the Governor's visit last month.

13.0 Still nothing new on the **lakefront**, which will now have no impact on us until next budget cycle.

14.0 Speaking of budget- there still isn't one forthcoming from Albany as of yet, despite the fact that the Senate expects to recess today for the summer. Speculation is that the next crucial date is late July, in time for Long Island schools to set their levies, and then for us to do so shortly thereafter. Remember the last time it was this late was disastrous for us. Let's hope that doesn't come to pass again.

AGENDA ITEMS: Two major discussions are likely to dominate our evening. They are:

1.0 Instrumental Music Department conversation we began in exec last time should be carried into open session with the arrival of the attached letter from Pete Goloski this past Monday. Mike and I have met with Pete to discuss his letter and options ranging from status quo and the problems we know, to dropping marching band, to adding staff and creating all new problems. I even mentioned the six study hall routine, although that is not one of the options we came up with in a mini-brainstorming session - and I rejected the notion of him playing security guard to the school out of hand. Pete is coming forward with what he recognizes as a problem and asking that we work with him on a solution. That is commendable and a whole different problem than what we might have if someone is not producing and doesn't know it. His solution would tend to be to drop marching band, and rather than speak for you in my refusal to accept that, I thought we all should speak with you. My proposed solution would be to offer the retirement incentive, and plan to spend the savings by keeping the money in salaries, hiring a new instrumental person to work with the youngest kids and mandate that all 4th graders start an instrument (or even younger kids). The more you start the more you'll keep, and letting a new young person work with the excited ones may mean a rebuilding that you're not going to see with half-hearted Pete. It's a gutsy move, though, and may not be politically salable. BUT, if your image of RCS is a publicly funded private school, then every elementary child learning to play an instrument is a big step in that direction. You could even start an elementary marching band separate from the secondary. The potential is there, and it would be a rebuild before you experienced staff turn-over, rather than throwing the whole thing at somebody new four or five years from now. Mike's and my conversation with Pete emphasized almost in these exact words, however, that such an option (which I put on the table - Pete would *NEVER* have thought we might consider such a thing) also meant that Pete's level of performance would need to rise as well, - that we couldn't have Betty and the new person working their tails off and have him be the old fart who sits in his office doing nothing with kids. Discussion included high level jazz band for the serious secondary students, chamber ensembles, alternative performances, even pep band. The premise would be that we would go after the arts image at RCS as aggressively as we've gone after the technology image. Why not be on the cutting

edge in two areas, and make a name for ourselves along the lines of an arts magnet as well as a technology magnet? We already have a very healthy problem developing with the frequency of use of the stage and auditorium, we are pumping money into improvements in that area, why not focus on it intensely and get back some of the pride that used to characterize the RCS music/drama program 20 years ago?

Interestingly, after our conversation last time and before Pete's emailed letter, I broached the idea with SDM last Thursday night and they were pretty excited about the concept of starting every elementary child in music as a forward thinking idea.... So there is some community support for such a far-flung notion. Barb was approached about the impact in the elementary and was favorably disposed as well.

So, let's talk over the options we have. My list is:

- drop marching band
- status quo (marching required for all band members and a reluctant director)
- status quo with new marching band director part-time
- status quo with marching band optional - Pete directing
- status quo with marching band optional - someone else directing part-time
- Elementary/middle school marching band only
- Competition level (not Pete)
- Add staff and build program (remembering your numbers are small)

I'd be glad to add items to the list, look at combinations thereof, etc... but we might as well talk about it now as to wait until this time next year when the conversation rolls around again. If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got. Pete is asking us to talk about the problem he knows he has, and I don't want it to be a deal made behind closed doors, no matter what the solution is. AND rather than talk about him and his program without his input, I thought it wise to raise as many issues as possible with him right there to respond to our/your questions and ideas. I'm sure we'll all be polite, but let's not be so polite we don't really do anything...

2.0 Program discussion from Mike about making **Introduction to Occupations**, currently an elective for those ninth graders and up pursuing a major in vocational education (BOCES) or business or technology here, into a requirement for all 8th graders and essentially accelerating all 8th graders to receive a high school credit is something we need your nod on. Mike and Dave have talked to several places, including SED, and have been given the green light to proceed with such a plan. The essence would be that Nancy Munn, Bob Kohler and Carol Efraimson would co-teach the class to all 8th graders, splitting the group throughout the year, and all of our 8th graders would take the required "modules" of the Intro to Occ class, take the Occ Ed Proficiency exam, and receive high school credit for this course. It would essentially replace our 8th grade curriculum in home and careers, technology and computers (not required), and avoid some of the duplication of material that kids who do Intro. to Occ as an elective currently find. It would also better utilize our staff in Nancy Munn, and increase the likelihood that our Intro to Occ School report card scores would go up, by changing the clientele of the class as well as the teacher(s). I think it makes sense, Dave has it in a tentative schedule and it works(including absorbing those current ninth-graders who still need it), SED has blessed it, the teachers are supportive, so why not give it a try?

3.0 Business stuff will include transfers which I will do after the warrant is run, an update on CBO, a re-establishment of the Tax Certiorari Reserve to the tune of \$20,000, an update on the retirement incentive anticipated, and an update on the Foundation (Foundation Committee

meets Monday night the 21st at 7 in the Board Room in case anybody wants to join in), as well as routine items.

4.0 SDM Update: SDM has been doing some self-reflection and has decided to meet five times next year instead of monthly, with a program and budget focus alternating around appropriate timing of school report cards, etc. Their idea is to hear more about program from the existing building teams rather than to try to second guess the work the staff is already doing to improve student achievement. Attendance has been spotty and this is the approach those most regularly attending would prefer.

5.0 Updates from Barb and Mike will let you know how busy year end is for us.

6.0 Under personnel items will be several things discussed last time:

6.1 Summer School for the secondary has shaped up quickly in the week we've had to work with. We offer the list of all in-house people willing to work more with those kids who need it this summer as shown on the agenda. Bob Ike will act as coordinator of the program (Bob is currently one of FIVE in-house people taking administrative coursework). We have met with Terry Mays and Barb to lay out a floor plan for what amounts to a K-12 summer program now, and we will isolate summer session to the south and west wings from the red tile area to the elementary computer lab. The Middle school program will run 20 days, the high school the required 30, both on a four day a week schedule, from 8 AM to Noon, with kids being able to ride the bus home at noon, but needing to get here on their own in the morning. (The elementary runs 9- Noon) Total cost will run circa \$11,000 with aid accounting for approximately all but \$3,000 of that.

6.2 Creation of Certified Administrative Assistant Position, abolition of Civil Service Administrative Assistant position, and appointment of Leanne to the new slot at \$36,000, all relates to our executive session discussion last time. Leanne is aware of the concerns for a "return to normalcy" with regard to her position and its future, as well as the duties she needs to cover with the CBO.

6.3 Creation of Civil Service Job title School Secretary I and the appointment to that position of Cindy Waugh at \$11.77 per hour and Marcy Bennett at \$9.43 per hour was also discussed in exec last time. These numbers move our office people from the low end to the middle of the pack regionally, and allow us the opportunity to keep them and remunerate them appropriately. They include the 2.95% raise they normally would have gotten under the existing contract plus the incremental jump to the new position. I do not recommend, however, that we eliminate the typist title, merely that we move these two people out of it. This provides an escape hatch in case anything goes wrong with this promotional plan. These salaries and this move are contingent upon the cooperation of the CSEA union group, represented at a Labor- Management Relations Committee meeting scheduled for Monday afternoon at 3 PM (remember, Mike?). I anticipate no problem, and have asked Bonnie to plan on these figures for the July 8 payroll for Marcy and Cindy - but you never know with union or money stuff. If a problem arises I'll just ask you to table the action proposed....

6.4 Establishment of salary at 3% increase (\$2,296) and a one year extension on the current five year contract for the superintendent, also discussed last time in exec, eliminates any change of early termination clause at this time. I will still ask that Marc Reitz (and maybe others - NYSCOSS?) provide us some samples of less draconian measures which may be more representative of the contract my peers have. (If I'm going to makes less money than my peers - it seems to me I should have many of the same contractual provisions - certainly not more punitive benefits - as well)

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- 6.5** We're ready to commit to **MJ Barber** as long term sub for Sheridan Davenport while she's out on family leave, and glad to have MJ available.
- 6.6** We're ready to accept the **resignation** of Cheryl Scott, one of our teacher aides who is moving away and Dora Snyder who has decided she likes her cleaner position after all and is not going to want to go back to monitoring.
- 6.7** We have some sundry additions to summer and sub staff as well.
- 7.0** **CSE stuff** awaits your acceptance of their work as well.

There, it should be an interesting meeting to say the least. (Not that they all aren't) Let's try to be open and problem-solving in our approach to the music situation, even if we can't bring it to full closure on Tuesday night. If things get too heavy or if an audience is present, we may want to talk about an exec with Pete invited (or not) if necessary to avoid personnel issues being too public.

See you then!

CM/CM