

Date: 7/21/99
To: Members, Board of Education
From: Chris Manaseri
Subject: Backup for second July meeting

It's only Wednesday, but my schedule of meetings tomorrow demands that I get this started so we can wrap it up Friday morning. It would seem like summer would cut down on out-of building meetings, but it hasn't. I've been on the road somewhere every day but one since we last met. This missive comes with the usual caveats about timeliness when begun a week in advance, however...

NON AGENDA ITEMS:

1.0 Capital Project is stalled at SED still. I have been in touch with Allen Kosoff, our project architect, about sundry details which the bureaucrats want ironed out still. Doorway widths, handicapped access to the concession area, dead floor space beyond 19 feet, and even an old drawing which show stairs between the high school and elementary in what is now the red tile area. I had to take pictures of the red tile ramp to send to prove that we're not inaccessible (ironic that the parent of the only wheelchairbound student in the school has to prove that issue, no?). Anyway, we obviously won't get anything started this summer at this stage of the game. Best we can hope for now are some cheaper bids during the Fall when contractors are hungrier. Still should be fine with our borrowing as long as we have a signed contract with the GC by January. Just what gets started when will be a matter of some negotiations, but we'll have to try to avoid disrupting the actual work of teaching and learning as much as possible. One more year on the old floor in the gym helps us get our money's worth out of the resurfacing we did three years ago as a temporary measure....

An additional issue with the delay is that our original project manager at SED retired July 1, and did not get us done before he did. They have not replaced him and have shuffled work around instead. I talked with Mike Mirsky about his retirement in Cooperstown last week and he was (not surprisingly) very cavalier about my problem and whom I might call.

2.0 Budget is stalled in Albany across the street from SED. Enclosed is a paper copy of email message received and forwarded this morning about progress. Should see things happen soon - it's almost time for tax bills to go out. That there will be more money for education is a given - where it will go is not. With the big push on standards and the lousy performance of many urban schools, I wouldn't be surprised to see the bulk of the money go to urban rather than suburban areas this time around, with rural people being forgotten again. We planned on receiving the governor's proposal plus the reinstatement of BOCES aid. Anything more is gravy, anything less trouble. Probably won't have these runs for you until August. Let's keep our fingers crossed.

3.0 CBO continues to function well. Gary started on Monday and will be meeting with Gloria this afternoon to do final budget transfers for 98-99. He also has our school tax bill information and will be working with Jim Bastian's office on getting those details lined up. We should be able to pass a tax warrant on August 10 and complete that process then. Soon we'll be into the SA100 and ST3 up to our eyeballs, and Gary will be a big help with that process.

Went to a shakedown cruise meeting of the CBO implementation team last week, and pushed the envelope a little about streamlining services, cross-training, adding banking and pooled investment services, adding tax collection and remote purchase requisitions for other schools, and using DocuShare. I think they'd rather I stay home during the next meeting (happens to me often - I'm used to it). We did agree to continue to meet throughout the Fall to look at improvements for 2000-01 already! Larry even asked us to think about how we would take in

any new schools wanting to join. (Clyde apparently expressed an interest in that their business manager left to take Gary's job at South Seneca).

In visiting with Mike Renne briefly this morning he thinks things are going well at the CBO, but not so back in his district. My sympathy extended to the point of telling him he just never sent enough people to the CBO to begin with. Only problem here so far is communication which we anticipated. We have to use the telephone more now and I always make a point to stop if I'm in the north end for something. Gary will be getting a key tomorrow to our building and we're setting up a mailbox here for him to act as courier this summer, then we'll add that to Mary Lynn's run this Fall when she does the parochial schools. Bottom line? The waters have not been as troubled as I had imagined they would be for us at this point.

4.0 Cooperative Drug Effort is underway between the four schools in Seneca County and two profs from Hobart and William Smith. This grows out of the March 31 public meeting, which one of the Profs, Dave Craig, attended. Dave followed up by addressing the county drug task force I co-chaired this year in May, and I invited him to meet with the superintendents about organizing an effort with us to address the substance use levels of our teens. They - Dave Craig and Wes Perkins - have instituted a "social norms" approach to providing information to college kids about their peers' behaviors which has had remarkable results on the campus (20% decrease in alcohol consumption). Several other colleges have built models around their work and they are working as consultants and presenters all over the country on this approach at the collegiate level. Basically what it advocates is broadcasting wide and far the truth about how many kids use and don't use, emphasizing the high number of kids who continue to make excellent and healthy choices about their behaviors, and encouraging a peer mentality among them. I'm enclosing some material about the work they've done FYI or you can find more at their webpage at <http://www.hws.edu/~alcohol>. We agreed over lunch on Monday to form a team at each high school and work together to replicate their program in a public school setting - a first of its kind approach which they might like to publish as an extension of their work. We would use our computer networks and our county-wide data to develop the same intensive media campaign they use as screen savers throughout the campus computer network, as well as other aspects of their approach. We plan to meet again in September on this and I'll keep you posted. One more shared service county-wide!

5.0 Foundation committee met again on Monday night with Ken Grounds, and the design team may be close to the end of its work. Current plans call for an initial reception for potential candidates for the Board of Trustees in mid-September at the Goosewatch Winery with which Carol Waite's husband Rick is affiliated. Attached FYI are minutes and a list in process - please keep that list quiet at this point, although we welcome suggestions for additions to be invited. You should plan on attending this reception as well, showing the Board's endorsement of this concept and cooperation in bringing a Foundation to this area. Tentative plans are for September 22nd or 21st depending on availability of the facility. Progress is being made and people seem pretty upbeat!

6.0 Also looking ahead - the **Friends of the MacDougall Schoolhouse** are organizing an open house for August 20-22 that you may want to mark on your calendars.

7.0 Bumped into **Mary Jennings** yesterday at the drug store and she seems to be doing very well with her treatments. Was in hospital four days last week and goes back in for six days in early August. I am meeting with Sandy Steele this week to discuss our tentative plans for covering Mary's duties during her semester long leave.

8.0 The white building is down and all but gone from the site as I write. I spoke with Steve Johnson at a Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors meeting this morning and he is pleased to be the successful bidder on our pole barn replacement. (You should know Bob Steele also bid but was thousands higher than the \$19,500 from Johnson which includes five overhead doors installed). Steve expects to have our new building in place by mid -August.

BACKUP PACKET

9.0 NYSIR continues to come through. We got our final billing for insurance for the year late and it is still \$5,000 lower than it was before we changed companies. Even better news is that we can expect to get back some of the capitalization cost we paid to join the organization because they are doing so well. That was a GOOD move!

10.0 RAITN cabinet maker will be here Monday. Ron Baker, their chief of installations was here this past Monday. All still on track for operational system by September 1. As we are cooperating with five other schools to the north on this project, there will be a unique training available to our RAITN-using staff for training through Syracuse University's Instructional Design and Development program, whereby during the year we will visit SU once and then conduct training in the optimal use of distance learning technology at three of the grant supported RAITN sites (RCS being one of them).

Also on this, Ron Baker is checking to see if the Time-Warner cable that we're running to all the classrooms in the building will accommodate the portable RAITN unit. If the Time Warner head end connection is powerful enough, we would then be able to have *EVERY* classroom have RAITN capability for live two way audio and video. Wouldn't **THAT** be neat? I don't know anyone in our area with that capability!

11.0 Energy bills have been forwarded for 98-99 to Ernie Rookey for analysis. I will let you know when I receive his report on our efficiencies versus our increased demand.

12.0 Shared Service committee (Mike and Cornelia) - I spoke with Doug Chappell and Theresa MacCheyne about dates. How would August 18, 19 or 23 work? Theresa seems interested in handling this herself as the direct counterpart to their union president being involved. Please let me know via email, voicemail, or leave a message after the meeting. Thanks. I will try to ascertain any interest in having the shared services committees from Seneca Falls and Waterloo meet with us this year as well.

13.0 *Nada numero*

14.0 Not on the agenda yet, but something I'd like you to think about is establishing a position (or two) called **Contract Substitute**. Canandaigua and several other schools in that area have gone to this model - in fact, Stacy Waugh, Cindy's daughter, who just got a regular job at Canandaigua for the fall, started out with this title there last year. The deal is that the District guarantees the selected substitute 135 days of employment in a year at the long -term rate of \$75 per day. In return the substitute guarantees their availability by agreeing to substitute nowhere else while under contract with us. We get the best available subs everytime we need them and they get some degree of job security. We could also use these people as coaches and for other kid-contact positions with some surety they would know the kids and feel part of the staff. Good training ground for potential hires, and a good way to reward those people willing to commit to us without actually having a full-time job for them. If you like the idea, give it some thought and talk it over informally with Mike and Barb and we'd still have time to act on it in August.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Your agenda will be dominated by two presentations this Tuesday evening -, High School Regents Results, and a Music Program Proposal. The annual Special Education Program Report we discussed last time will wait until August as Barb's been out this week at training and you may have enough on your plate already this time. I would ask that you let guests go first, then turn your attention to the details of the agenda....

0.0 Before you begin you need to appoint a clerk pro tem to take notes and record your votes as Leanne will be at a conference in Albany this week. Don't forget!

1.0 Graduation report from Dave Hubman and Mike Midey. Dave will be first in line and share with you on powerpoint the results our kids had on this June's Regents Exams. These are the data which will be on next year's school report card, and Dave will highlight the way they will look there. (Remember that pesky average class enrollment issue? It's still there....) I am confident that you will continue to be pleased with the way our students perform on these very public measures. We will post this on DocuShare as well for the world to see. By this topic going first, we can get the technology out of the way and the less controversial presentation, as well, saving more time for you to devote to the music discussion.

2.0 Music Program Presentation: Despite my absence (ironically at a *Concert*), I have asked Betty Gerych and Pete Goloski to attend your meeting with a proposal for an additional music position, as discussed last time. I have met with them twice this past week, with Barb and Mike as well one of those times, to flesh out this proposal. It is a group effort and carries the support of the administration at all levels.

The upshot of the proposal is that we add a second instrumental music person to work with elementary starters and an elective marching band. This person would also take the Middle Level general music program in order to free up some time from Betty and Pete's current schedule and to work closely with the MLTeam on interdisciplinary and group work. This would allow us to add several nice features to our program including double lessons weekly for the youngest starter students, vocal lessons for All In A Chord and other serious students in the vocal program, additional small instrumental groups and performances, and some time devoted to our stage productions on lighting and sound. This person would share space in the band room and act as an incentive to productivity all around. We envision a lively young person interested in making band (and marching band) fun, in organizing exchanges and trips and maybe even competitions, all the while supporting the programs we already have in place by the gift of time. Time to work with smaller groups, individual lessons, time to work together as a department on special events and programs - maybe even guest artists in the school. This is an opportunity to make RCS a music magnet like we think it is a technological magnet, and it addresses a problem we know we have proactively.

You have a substantial salary savings which you are about to realize with the retirement of Bobbi Nelson and Marge Larrabee. You can afford to add this to your program at no cost beyond what you've already budgeted because of that. I **DO** want to push you to making a decision (this is the third meeting in a row at which we've discussed this issue), as we need time to advertise and hire if we're going to do so. If not, then no harm deciding that now, either. After the presentation I have included a resolution to add a position on the agenda for you consideration.

Barb and Mike will help with the presentation and will respond to any questions you may have about impact on the schedule, on kids, on costs, etc... We think this makes sense and will make our school a better place for kids with an interest in the arts and music in particular. Isn't that what we're supposed to be doing? Barb and Mike will also try to make sure this isn't a Pete Goloski roast, nor a testimonial on his part about what kids are or are not willing to do anymore. Let's keep the focus on the potential not the problem. (As MY favorite Kennedy used to say, *"Some men see things as they are and ask why; I see things that never were and ask why not?"*) Let's ask, Why not?!

Good Luck! (Keep in mind any press present and the open meetings law). Call me to talk about this if you feel the need. I'm in town until Tuesday at 8 AM.

3.0 Routine items should be.

4.0 Authorization to participate in a doctoral study for Steve Szatko, formerly of Phelps-Clifton Springs now Sherburne Earlville. I got an interesting email from Steve about his doctoral research. He is looking to study a school or schools that have made a turn-around from a

budget defeat or defeats as his dissertation at SU. He specifically is interested in examining the leadership which was part of a school's successful turnaround. He asked whether RCS might fit his bill and I described some of what has occurred here this decade centered around the economic uncertainty in the community over SEAD. He would like permission to interview staff and use the data he collects anonymously in his dissertation. I thought I'd ask you officially so that there is some record of the approval and some authorization other than mine. I don't want it perceived to be that we're buddy-buddy in the same program and the same university and colluding in some way. I don't think there'd be any harm done, and the time commitment for any one individual (including perhaps some of you) would be minimal. I have told him I would seek your permission and then get back to him. I recommend we choose to participate - we might learn something, too. No cost other than time to anyone but Steve himself.

5.0 Gary is doing budget transfers with Gloria this afternoon to close out our 98-99 expenditures and encumbrances. I will have a total number for you regarding this for agenda purposes. Remember two things- (1) I moved money around once already, but that was mistakenly before the final payroll (I had thought it was after that), and (2) somebody else is doing these transfers, so they may not use the same patterns or sources for funds that I usually do. Remember- these are *TRANSFERS*, not new expenditures - it's all the same money, just being spent in different codes. Many of these transfers, particularly in salary codes (150's and 160's) would have been done only once, had I not jumped the gun on trying to do them before the final payroll had been posted. Sorry about that...

I will ask Gary to plan to come to our August 10 meeting to introduce himself to you at that time. So far he's doing well making sure RCS has work for him, not just Waterloo and that he's giving us our fair share of time.

We also have wording on tax bills that we need to bring to you- standard stuff.

6.0 Licette Catania will join you to report on elementary summer school and her internship.

7.0 Mike may have some extracurriculars for you (he and Barb are at training together all this week) and maybe some other updates (like his office move) and secondary summer school. Soccer camp is also on the agenda for discussion.

8.0 We have found time to interview some **people we'd like to hire**, too. **Linda Hill Brewer** used to work at Romulus in the 70's and is returning to the area with her husband as he retires from the DEC in Albany. She brings to us ten years of teaching experience with a variety of special student populations, and will make an excellent addition to our special education staff, replacing Cathy Jordan who will become the high school reading person (Cathy is certified in both Reading and Special Ed). Linda's salary, like Marie Johnson's when we last hired a veteran, reflects what she would be making if all ten years of her experience were in Romulus. **Katharine Lewis** comes to us as the long term sub for Janice Hyde with great promise. She is an O'Connell and knows us well. We want to make it official that we welcome **Bobbi Nelson** back from retirement for part-time teaching three periods per day cheaply, and we want to appoint **Sandy Steele** to take over Mary Jennings's duties for the Fall semester in the attendance portion of running the switchboard and dispatch function of our transportation/attendance office. Leanne and I met with Sandy on this Thursday and we have arranged training for her on Schoolmaster attendance for early August. We also want to make **Kate Essom** official as a Teaching assistant to pick up the math remediation which had been part of Jim Mason's job. This will complete the switching around that we know about at this point and cover all of our bases so far. (We'll see what August brings).

Add to this list Bob Cline and Sue Schrader approved last time and MJ Barber for Sheridan's leave before that and we'll see a few changes around RCS this year again.

8.0 In other **personnel** news:

BACKUP PACKET

Pam Jennings wishes to retire and take advantage of the incentive for ERS. Pam has been a bus monitor with us for a couple of years, but has many years of service previously at Willard. This will be an advantage to her at little or no cost to us.

Cheryl Farley wishes to take a year's leave to go to school.

Mike has some appointments for extracurricular assignments he's ready to go with and some the stipends of which we may need to discuss as negotiations items pending your decisions Tuesday night (Peer mediation we need to establish officially with the RFA yet, and then music titles).

There. That should get you through an interesting session. Again. my apologies for not being present, but I trust you'll do just fine without my two cents at the table. I'll be anxious to know what some of your decisions are and will be sure to be thinking about that on the way home Wednesday. IF you have any questions or concerns once you've seen the packet, **PLEASE** feel free to give me a call at home this weekend or at school on Monday.

Will the pro tem clerk please leave notes with Mike or Barb for Leanne and I? Thanks.

CM/CM

Attachments