

**Dighton~Rehoboth Regional District School Committee**  
**Special Meeting ~ March 08, 2014**

A Special Meeting of the Dighton~Rehoboth Regional School Committee was held on March 08, 2014, in the Dighton~Rehoboth Regional High School library.

**Present:**

Richard Barrett  
Christopher Andrade  
Tiffany Bartholomew  
Eliza Couture  
Peter Hebda  
David Katseff  
Susan Lorenz  
Raymond Medeiros  
Timothy Rapoza  
Janice Terry

**Also:**

Kellie Fagan, Recording Secretary

*Mr. Medeiros stated that the committee would enter into open session at 9:05 AM, and was being videotaped and recorded with the help of the Rehoboth Cable Advisory Board.*

*Mr. Medeiros led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Mr. Medeiros explained the interview process, and introduced Mr. Glenn Koocher, MASC, who would be assisting the committee with procedural issues for the meeting (i.e. committee questions, public input, voting, etc.)*

**Mr. Medeiros introduced Mr. Kyle Riley, candidate for the Superintendent of Schools position.**

Mr. Riley gave his opening statement. Mr. Riley gave a brief history of his employment and relevant Superintendent position experience. Mr. Riley was a teacher, moved on to an administrative position, was asked to be an interim principal, and has continued his upward climb to the Director of Special Education for the district.

Mr. Riley stated that he brings a varied background, continuity for staff, and longevity (he plans on remaining as Superintendent if appointed), to the position of Superintendent of Schools.

The committee asked Mr. Riley various interview questions:

- **Management Style:** Mr. Riley has had the chance to observe and learn under 3 Superintendents. He recommended that there will be administrative meetings on a weekly basis. He noted that the district administration is excellent, and he would like input on a regular basis from everyone. Mr. Riley stated that he would be the Superintendent that the district “needs”, not the Superintendent that we “know”. He will work with town officials, parents, community members, and students, in order to be involved in the district. His style would consist of collaboration with all teachers.

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- **Professional Development:** Mr. Riley stated his motto: how do you teach every child? Mr. Riley feels that professional development should focus on this question. This district needs to align our curriculum within each school (elementary to elementary, middle to middle). More importantly, our School Improvement Plan (SIP) needs to be revised. We need an active, up-to-date plan, which will include consistency between the schools.
- **Budget ~ Personnel:** Mr. Riley believes that the updated School Improvement Plan will be linked with budget and staff issues. The SIP must be a concise plan, which will be compiled with the School Committee and district teachers.
- **Finance and Budget:** Mr. Riley reviewed the proposed Special Education reorganization. This reorganization will save money and produce consistency throughout the district.

Mr. Andrade asked Mr. Riley about the FY '15 budget. He asked in which direction Mr. Riley thinks that the proposed budget should go ~ higher reductions (Level 2) versus the 5.5% (Level 1) proposal. Mr. Riley responded that he will fight for student needs. The district cannot educate students properly without help from the towns. Mr. Riley would fight for funding from the towns. He understands the budget process, and would educate communities as to the real picture in the schools, without the proper funding.

Mr. Rapoza asked about the changes to the SIP in relation to the budget. Mr. Riley recommended that district needs to be very specific on the district's mission/goals/direction.

Mr. Rapoza asked that, once the new SIP is created, how would he use it as it as a guide. Mr. Riley said that the SIP would be budget driven, and ensure district consistency. Mr. Riley noted that we need consistently for any SIP to remain active and effective.

Mr. Rapoza asked if everything would be tied back to the SIP? Mr. Riley said that it would.

- **Leading in a Highly Complex and Challenging Field:** Mr. Riley realizes that many roles are taken on by being a Superintendent. He said that he will ultimately be responsible for whatever happens within the district. Mr. Riley discussed happenings in the Special Education Department. Mr. Riley stated that the district needs a good curriculum coordinator, and that he is a good delegator of duties. He will build teams for student instruction, and staff. The district will need to reorganization some current duties. Mr. Riley is recommending that the district hire a Facilities Director, as our current Business Administrator cannot do everything.

Mr. Katseff asked about the Facilities Manager ~ what his thoughts are between hiring a Facilities Manager, or keeping two (2) teachers in the district? Mr. Riley stated that we need to

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research other avenues in order to accomplish both. In the end, however, Mr. Riley cannot justify losing educators.

- **Entry and transition plan:** Mr. Riley does not anticipate a difficult transition, as he has experience within the district. His transition could start immediately so that he could be part of everything currently happening in the district. He noted that his site visit was very helpful in this process; he learned that you should not assume to know what is needed, but to speak with staff/students to find out. The district needs to support their employees.
- **Union Relations / Collective Bargaining:** Mr. Riley served on the Paraprofessional contract negotiations. His team created the evaluation tool, with the collaboration of administration and Paraprofessionals. Mr. Riley was also involved in contract negotiations during his former employment. Mr. Riley feels that the district needs open dialogue that is “real”. He noted that the Paraprofessional union has come to him in the past for advice. This has avoided grievances. Mr. Riley worked on unclear language in the Paraprofessionals’ contract. He has also worked with our legal counsel concerning the contract. Mr. Riley feels that, as a Superintendent, he would give the School Committee Negotiations Team all of the information needed before “going to the table”. He will review both sides, and would not be an advocate for either bargaining unit; he would take direction from the School Committee. Mr. Riley reiterated that he will be a supporter of what is important for the kids.
- **PARCC and Common Core:** Mr. Riley has not had any involvement with PARCC or the Common Core directly, but is knowledgeable on both. The Superintendent needs to keep everyone involved about PARCC and the state regulations. The district also needs to have the best technology for the PARCC testing. Mr. Riley will ensure that the Curriculum Coordinator is up-to-speed, and that the Technology Director purchases the appropriate technology for students. This could all be part of the revised SIP. The district needs to educate parents/students on the transition from MCAS to PARCC. Along with taking the PARCC tests, we must guarantee that all students leave our district with knowledge and problem-solving skills.

Mr. Hedba asked what Mr. Riley thinks about the current teacher/student assessments? Mr. Riley stated that the assessments are aligned with the common core and that we need to assess and fill educational gaps. He pointed out that the district needs to assess early in a student’s career.

- **Working with School Committee:** Mr. Riley feels that communication should be open between the School Committee and the Superintendent: “No back-door conversations”. There would be weekly reports to the School Committee on everything happening in the district. The Superintendent and School Committee must be open-minded in order to work for the kids.

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- **Making Mistakes:** Mr. Riley talked about a mistake made while he was the temporary principal in his previous employment. With respect to staff errors, Mr. Riley stated that he takes the ultimate responsibility for everything in the district. He also noted that a positive action can come out of a negative one.

Mrs. Terry asked Mr. Riley if he had made any mistakes since joining the D~R team, approximately 2 years ago. Mr. Riley stated that he had not, as he has asked for direction and feedback from all 3 Superintendents, if/when he was in-doubt of something.

- **Effective Teaching and Classroom Management:** Mr. Riley noted that he regularly performs a walk-through at each school, although he feels that this is the responsibility of the Assistant Superintendent. He believes that each student needs a clear vision and clear goals from each of their instructors. The district needs more and improved professional development, so that no educator is ineffective in their classrooms. This professional development should take place during the summer months. The district must find a way to increase teacher participation in summer professional development. We need to have "content" professional development on a consistent basis.

Mr. Andrade asked Mr. Riley how familiar is he with the new teacher evaluation process, and what, if anything, would he do to improve it? Mr. Riley is currently "observing" the pre-school teachers: he visits the pre-school at least 4 times each week to talk to teachers, do student observations, and give the staff his feedback.

Mrs. Terry asked Mr. Riley if he currently evaluates any staff member(s). Mr. Riley evaluates the school nurses, while the school principals evaluate teachers (including Special Education teachers).

- **Heart of an Effective Administrative Team:** Mr. Riley looks for an administrative team that puts the kids first, works hard, and works smart. He believes there is also a need for good culture and climate with staff and within the schools.

Mr. Rapoza addressed the fact that administration longevity seems to be lacking in this district. He asked Mr. Riley what his proposed longevity would be if he was appointed to the Superintendent of Schools position. Mr. Riley stated that he would not have applied for the position, if he didn't plan on staying.

Mr. Barrett asked how Mr. Riley would deal with a financial crisis, to get the most "bang for the buck". Mr. Riley is looking to get the students the best education possible, within any financial constraints. He would need School Committee direction to create a budget plan; and stay true to the plan that is best for kids. Mr. Riley noted that he has been creative in saving the Special Education Department money by bringing out-of-district students back into the district. This action also ensures that all students receive the best services available.

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Mr. Riley gave a closing statement. He explained that he is a well-rounded person, has experience with a variety of things (i.e. was a School Committee member in another district, he strives for efficiency, has facilities experience, and has a commitment to the district). District continuity is lacking; however, a revised SIP will assist in continuity, and the staff feeling secure.

*Mr. Medeiros stated that the committee would break at: 10:35 AM.*

*The committee returned to open session at: 10:50 AM.*

Mr. Medeiros introduced Mrs. Janice Rotella, candidate for the position of Superintendent of Schools.

Mrs. Rotella made an opening statement. She believes that the Superintendent's position is founded on open community, district, and School Committee communication. The Superintendent needs a motivated administrative team, and positive staff relationships ~ this is essential for district collaboration. Mrs. Rotella has over 25 years of experience, with a long-term focus on student success. She has the knowledge of various education-related positions: school principal, facilities manager, school teacher. Mrs. Rotella tends to look at the big picture, relying on her past experiences. She knows that good curriculum and consistency across any district are essential components for a successful educational experience. Mrs. Rotella has been an active member in contract negotiations, labor management, teacher evaluation, has been on 2 school building construction committees, has technology experience, has professional development knowledge, and experience in grant writing.

- **Management Style:** Mrs. Rotella will look for the best way to communicate and coordinate with all 5 schools, the central office, and administration. To accomplish this, she will use a multitude of efforts: open communication is key ~ need to schedule regular, bi-weekly meetings with administration. One meeting focusing on business and operations, and one meeting for curriculum and instruction. In addition, she would have meetings with the expanded administration (i.e. assistant principals, program coordinators, etc.). Communication must go beyond the school. The Superintendent's model is critical for School Committee, community, and student communication. A Superintendent needs to be aware of all parts of the district, which includes the 5 schools, as well as the Central Office. Within the Central Office, and with other staff members, a Superintendent must be a good leader with an understanding of different work styles. A Superintendent has to work with others and build trust. Together they can make this district a winner.
- **Professional Development:** The "art of teaching" preservation is the heart of education. A school system should never forget that the teacher/student relationship is most important. Mrs. Rotella believes that the district needs a strong professional development program for

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all teachers. The professional development should be balanced with open time with teachers, bringing in consultants from different fields, and uniform professional development for all teachers. Professional development can focus on the “art of teaching”.

Mr. Medeiros asked who would determine the content of the professional development, and how far in advance would it be announced to the teachers? Mrs. Rotella said that surveys can be sent out to the teachers, to determine the areas of professional development they would be interested in. It is critical that this professional development take place over the summer, before the start of the school year.

- **School Budgeting - Personnel:** The budget is the most important responsibility of the Superintendent, with the input from the School Committee. Mrs. Rotella believes in a zero-based budget, with a “needs assessment” of that budget each year. This will to measure that budget’s effectiveness. The district needs to build a budget based on district goals, and student learning needs, now and in the future. The budget must support short and long-term goals. The budget must also be “sold” to the public~marketing is crucial. She will conduct formal and informal public meetings to explain the school budget. Mrs. Rotella has experience with staff cuts due to budget constraints. She, however, thought outside-of-the-box, and solved the problem to everyone’s satisfaction.
- **Regional Finance and Budget:** Open communication is essential for a successful budget. The district needs to inform all citizens as to what is needed for student learning and growth. She would invite community members into the schools to familiarize them with our schools. She will hold shared towns events to draw the schools and communities together, not keep them apart. We have 2 communities that are committed to education, but are not always on the same page.

Mr. Katseff asked Mrs. Rotella what her focus would be? Mrs. Rotella acknowledges that any staff reduction is painful. The district will need to start with a budget assessment/evaluation. A good budget must begin with the student’s needs, and then focus on the teaching needs. Teachers are critical, but every classroom important and then we focus on teaching needs. Every classroom is critical (class size, equity, effective instruction, student needs, etc.). Lastly, a district needs a comprehensive, effective Capital Improvement Plan.

- **Leading in a Highly Complex and Challenging Field:** Mrs. Rotella’s primary area of focus is creating a team effort. The Superintendent needs to be strong, humble, and ready to take responsibility for his/her actions. You need to learn your administrative teams’ strengths. Once again, we need district consistencies. We should look at preventative actions for facilities. Mrs. Rotella would build a Central Office team to hear what’s happening, what’s working, etc. She can build an employee’s strengths for their position, as well as give that person stability.

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- **Entry and Transition Plan:** Mrs. Rotella is looking to start immediately, to be a part of the FY '15 budget process. She would like to visit the towns, meet faculty and students, and go into each of the buildings. The transition timeline will be set by the School Committee; however, Mrs. Rotella feels that a gradual transition with a definite timeline is the best idea. She would put together an entry plan with the district administration.
- **Union Relations / Collective Bargaining:** Mrs. Rotella has participated in 3 teachers' contracts and 1 secretaries' contract negotiations. She also negotiated amendments to the new teachers' contract. This contract consisted of reorganization, schedule changing, and evaluation of the contract. She has much experience with different contracts and grievances of all types. Mrs. Rotella believes she is good at resolving differences, and therefore avoids grievances. She knows that the Superintendent must be involved throughout any grievance process.

Mr. Katseff asked if Mrs. Rotella would advocate for either labor or management in contract negotiations? Mrs. Rotella stated that the Superintendent would have to represent both, as we need to have education, without sacrificing the labor force.

- **PARCC and the Common Core:** Mrs. Rotella was the PARCC testing coordinator for her district. She is deeply committed to ensuring that district technology meets the needs of the students for PARCC testing. We need to teach students and parents about the tests; parents and students must understand the test transition.
- **Working With School Committee:** Mrs. Rotella believes that the authority of the School Committee is clearly laid out – they set the budget, as well as district policy. The Superintendent's job is to make sure that the budget is effective and efficient before presenting it to the committee, and to implement the committee's policies across the district. The Superintendent and the School Committee must always work together. The committee must be informed immediately of anything and everything going on in the district.
- **Making Mistakes:** Mrs. Rotella reviewed a past error made in her career. As far as staff mistakes, they must be addressed privately and clearly. There is no need to embarrass anyone. You cannot, however, lower your standards in order to avoid addressing an incident/mistake. A good leader emphasizes what people are doing right, not what they are doing wrong.
- **School / Classroom Visits:** A Superintendent needs to be in classrooms/school buildings on a weekly basis. The Superintendent must observe teachers, and listen to students. A Superintendent should be looking for student learning, enthusiastic teachers, and a clean

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facility ~ a clean facility builds respect and pride in each school. With the new teacher evaluation, you must work with those who need improvement. Get evidence first, and then make an educator plan for that teacher's needs. Teachers need to be supported, but "needs improvement" evidence must be acted upon immediately. Then the building administrator needs to update the Superintendent on that employee's progress.

- **Heart of an Effective Administrative Team:** A skilled administrative team must be compassionate, and empathic. They need to listen and respond. "They" versus "I"; should be "we" and "with me".

Mrs. Lorenz asked about Mrs. Rotella's experience with a vocational department. Mrs. Rotella responded that there is one Chapter 74 class at her current school, and this is an area that she needs to learn more about.

Mr. Katseff asked for the pros and cons of teacher evaluations. Mrs. Rotella stated that the pros would be: peer observation and collaboration, and an administrative checks and balance system. She believes there should be stipends for teachers who evaluate. The cons would be that teachers are not comfortable in an evaluation situation, and it takes a great deal of training and time for all involved.

Mrs. Rotella made her closing statement, noting that students are the reason for everything we do. A successful school system needs good communication, consistency, and collaboration. Dighton~Rehoboth has all the pieces and potential to be a great district.

*Mr. Medeiros stated that the he committee would break at 12:35 PM.*

*The committee returned to open session at: 12:45 PM.*

*Mr. Medeiros introduced Dr. Anthony Azar, candidate for the Superintendent of Schools Position.*

Dr. Azar made his opening statement. Dr. Azar believes that he can take the Dighton~Rehoboth Regional School District to the next level. He has children in our school system, and community ties. He is familiar with the district.

- **Management Style:** Communication, consistency, and coordination are the most important skills for a good leader. You must be transparent; no surprises. A good leader must demonstrate his goals, aspirations, etc. as positive actions. Look for the "best team" ~ identify strengths in everyone (staff) and use those to an advantage.
- **Professional development:** Dr. Azar feels that student assessments are over emphasized, and the "art of teaching" is being lost. On the flip side, without student assessments,

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children will lose out. You need to identify the needs of every student. The district has to change things, even if they are in a “comfort zone”. Teachers have to look at data to see what is working or not working. This data cycle can bring back the “art of teaching”.

- **School Budget ~ Personnel:** The budget is the job of the Superintendent, with recommendations from the School Committee, after collaborating with the administrative team. The district must maintain the integrity of instructional programs in the budget, while supporting students in all aspects. The social-emotional piece is paramount for student success. For staffing issues with budget constraints, Dr. Azar feels that a balance must be achieved between programs and personnel. He believes that student programs would drive any decision(s) he would have in difficult financial times.

Mr. Andrade asked when Dr. Azar would decide to cut personnel, if necessary. Dr. Azar responded that he would bring in his administrative team before making any decision(s). They know what each building needs better than anyone. The district must have a rationale for any personnel reduction(s). You must have honest and open discussions, asking what the communities want for their children. One must also be aware of why students are transferring out-of-district. What do those families look for that they cannot receive in Dighton~Rehoboth. The Superintendent, School Committee, administration, and staff are all in this process together, and they need to follow through on any budget decisions. Most importantly, the schools need to move out of Level 2, there is no reason why Dighton~Rehoboth is categorized as Level 2.

- **Regional Finance and Budgeting:** The Superintendent must bring the two communities together ~ start a discussion and find the common ground (students). Dr. Azar has the skills to unify the towns, parents, taxpayers, and stakeholders. He will set procedure/protocol for unifying community members and towns. He will be accessible to everyone.

Mr. Andrade asked how Dr. Azar would provide consistent services for both towns. Dr. Azar would begin with good instructional leaders. Consistency stems from common student needs ~ research the common needs between the two towns. Identify which programs are inconsistent, and do a “cross walk” to find a way for common ground/consistency.

- **Leading in a Highly Complex and Challenging Field:** One of Dr. Azar’s areas of focus would be to look at the Central Office. He will look at all staff roles. The Central Office is the support staff for the entire district.
- **Entry and Transition Plan:** There is always a learning curve, but Dr. Azar’s transition will be seamless. He is a community member who knows people and understands the district’s needs. Dr. Azar believes that he could come to the district before July 1<sup>st</sup>, to be included in the budget process, and to transition into the district before July 01, 2014.

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- **Union Negotiations and Collective Bargaining:** Dr. Azar has experience with both union and administrative contracts. The administrators asked that Dr. Azar advocate for them during contract negotiations. The Superintendent, however, must work with the School Committee's negotiation teams before beginning any bargaining process. The Superintendent plays an advisory role in the process.

Mr. Katseff asked if Dr. Azar would advocate for labor or management in contract negotiations. Dr. Azar replied that he would have to advocate for management; however, the teams must come to a mutual agreement on any contract. The Superintendent will go into negotiations as a manager.

- **PARCC Testing and Common Core:** Dr. Azar has been very involved with PARCC in New Bedford. New Bedford will be test-piloting 4 of their schools in May 2014. He has been the point person for the pilot testing. Technology is a large part of PARCC testing; the pilot test will show if New Bedford is equipped with the appropriate technology for the PARCC testing.

Mr. Hebda addressed Dr. Azar regarding student assessments. He noted that student assessments keep growing and the teacher's job has changed. The student's focus is on getting a good assessment only. Dr. Azar recommended that the district identify which assessments work, and which do not. The district needs to draw the line somewhere ~ don't do assessments for assessments sake. He will create teams to focus on specific assessment data. This can help determine what styles of assessment are beneficial. Most importantly, the district must be able to align having fun learning, with our Strategic Plan, the School Improvement Plan, district initiatives, and the budget.

Mr. Andrade asked Dr. Azar about his experience with writing grants. Dr. Azar is very familiar with grant writing, especially grants for professional development. When professional development funds were received, they were tied into educator evaluation, and how teachers use their professional development. Dr. Azar successfully wrote Title II, Title III, and MTSS grants. He was also involved in the technology piece of additional grant writing.

- **Working with the School Committee:** Dr. Azar pointed out that there will always be disagreements, but he would work with School Committee, in order to reach a consensus. Ultimate the authority lies with the School Committee, and the Superintendent works for the School Committee. He feels that decisions need to be in the best interest of students; this trickles down to the district staff, parents, and students.

Mr. Andrade asked how Dr. Azar would handle a School Committee member's inappropriate influence. Dr. Azar explained how he would respectfully speak to that member regarding their behavior, and remind that person that no member is to have their "own agenda".

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- **Making Mistakes:** Dr. Azar recalled an error he made at his previous employment. With respect to staff mistakes, Dr. Azar tries to look for the good in an employee and not the bad. However, there would be a private conversation to clarify any error with the employee, and then he would work through that error with that employee. Dr. Azar believes in “progressive discipline”.
- **Effective Teaching and Classroom Management:** Dr. Azar stated that classroom visits are essential; you have to see what is happening in the schools. He looks for a mastery objective in each classroom (i.e. “students will be able to ...”), with a matching activity. The Superintendent needs to talk to the students in the classroom, check for student understanding, and evidence of progress from the teacher. Teachers become facilitators/coaches to the students. What you see in the classroom is how you develop your professional development. Dr. Azar believes that there has to be administrative/teacher “improvement time”.
- **Heart of an Effective Administrative Team:** An effective administrative team will have humanity, personality, open minds, flexibility, honesty, recognizes their mistakes, apologizes, is reflective, and has a sense of humor.

Mrs. Lorenz asked Dr. Azar why would he be able to move our district forward, when his current district is failing (Dr. Azar is the Curriculum Coordinator at this time). Dr. Azar explained that he was asked to take that position. The Central Office administration asked Dr. Azar to help district-wide to bring the school(s) back. In that time, the schools have gone from failing status (last 2 years), to successful MCAS testing. He can take that experience, and move Dighton~Rehoboth to a Level 1 performing district.

Dr. Azar gave his closing statement. He quoted from a letter of recommendation from Representative Patricia Haddad, on moving this district forward. There is tremendous potential that needs to be tapped into. That is a skill set that Dr. Azar will bring to Dighton~Rehoboth.

*Mr. Medeiros stated that the committee would break for lunch, and return to open session in 30 minutes at 2:25 PM.*

*The committee re-entered open session at: 3:20 PM.*

Mr. Glenn Koocher, MASC, spoke about procedural issues.

Mr. Medeiros explained the ballot method of voting.

Mr. Medeiros spoke about the site visit reports of each candidate.

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Mrs. Lorenz read the Dighton~Rehoboth site visit review for Mr. Kyle Riley.

Mr. Medeiros read the Wareham site visit review for Mrs. Janice Rotella.

Mrs. Bartholomew read the New Bedford site visit review for Dr. Anthony Azar.

*Committee deliberations ensued:*

Mr. Katseff commented that all 3 candidates are good. He noted that each candidate has different traits/priorities, but what is the best fit for our district now?

- Budget construction?
- Curriculum focus?
- Management skills?

We will need a manager of all subject areas right now, and over the next 5 years. Mr. Katseff is recommending a “standing” Superintendent for the position.

Mr. Rapoza stated that the district needs the best educator at this time. All 3 would make good managers, but we need a good educator now. That’s how we will move our district forward.

Mrs. Lorenz said that we already have a good administrative staff. What the district needs is longevity, stability, management, and a person with strength and a vision.

Mr. Barrett noted that the Superintendent needs to be a “jack of all trades”. He feels that, from day one to graduation day, there must be a forward progression for each student.

Mrs. Couture asked what qualifications the School Committee is looking for: manager, educator, instructional leader?

Mr. Andrade believes that an educational leader is needed.

Mrs. Terry noted that it is not necessarily a positive thing when a candidate is “in-house”. This district needs someone who is qualified in everything.

Mrs. Bartholomew stated that “in-house” experience is important.

Mr. Hebda addressed the committee regarding consensus building between the towns, teachers, staff, and tax payers. It seems that everyone wants something different. The district needs to find a Superintendent who can balance everyone’s needs.

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Mr. Medeiros said that each School Committee member has their own reason(s) for choosing a candidate. The committee needs to decide which candidate is best for the district.

Mr. Rapoza noted that longevity is very important. Will the new Superintendent stay? There seems to be a lack of commitment in this district.

Mrs. Couture said she is comfortable with hiring an "in-house" person, but a fresh outlook could also be beneficial.

Mr. Hebda stated that Mr. Riley knows the system and staff, but is a good Special Education Director. The district should not lose him as a Special Education Director. Mr. Hebda also had concerns about Mr. Riley's future plans and longevity ideas. Dr. Azar brings some inside knowledge to the table by being a community member. Dr. Azar could bridge any gaps between the towns, teachers, etc.

Mr. Barrett spoke about the different site visits. He noted that only Mrs. Rotella's staff knew who she was, while both Dr. Azar's and Mr. Riley's students knew who they were.

Mrs. Lorenz felt that Mr. Riley went above and beyond his job with the pre-school project. He was given that project with a minimum completion timeline, and he succeeded. She noted that town officials liked working with Mr. Riley as well; things went very smoothly during the project. Mr. Riley, in Mrs. Lorenz's opinion, will be also be an active administrator.

Mr. Rapoza stated that Mr. Riley had a great mentor in Michael Malone, but how will the transition from being a staff member to being a leader work? Mr. Rapoza reiterated that Mr. Riley's proposal to update the SIP is critical.

The committee discussion continued:

- Mrs. Rotella had the STEM academy, but her years of experience could be a concern
- Mr. Riley does not have any experience with PARCC
- Dr. Azar is a good team builder, with many years of experience in large districts
- It may be a detriment that Dr. Azar is a resident of one of our towns
- Dr. Azar can diffuse problems and knows the most about state mandates

Mrs. Bartholomew noted that Mr. Riley stepped up after Dr. Elineema left the district. She also feels that a Special Education background could be helpful to the district. The School Improvement Plan update that Mr. Riley proposed is crucial.

Mrs. Couture agreed that the School Improvement Plan is important. The SIP leads to everything else in the district.

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Mr. Katseff is leaning toward a candidate with overall experience. Also, the length of time in a position does not mean as much as the quality of that experience. Dr. Azar had a plethora of different experiences and situations (from Special Education, to budget, to union negotiations). Dr. Azar has experience with adversity. Mr. Katseff stated that he thinks Dr. Azar will bring longevity back to this position, while Mr. Riley will not.

Mr. Barrett addressed the committee regarding Dr. Azar. He reiterated that Dr. Azar moved to this community because of the school system. He is familiar with both towns, not just Rehoboth.

Mrs. Bartholomew pointed out that both Mr. Riley and Dr. Azar are very visible. Mrs. Couture stated that Mrs. Rotella did not seem to have as much visibility.

Mr. Barrett stated that during Dr. Azar's site visit, people volunteered to come and speak on his behalf, while the other 2 candidates requested certain fellow employees speak on their behalf.

Mrs. Terry noted that all 3 candidates had negative comments from their site visits, as well as positive ones.

Mr. Medeiros asked for an informal candidate selection from committee members

Mr. Andrade ~ Mrs. Rotella  
Mr. Barrett ~ Dr. Azar  
Mrs. Bartholomew ~ Mr. Riley  
Mrs. Couture ~ Dr. Azar  
Mr. Hebda ~ Dr. Azar  
Mr. Katseff ~ Dr. Azar  
Mrs. Lorenz ~ Mr. Riley  
Mr. Medeiros ~ Dr. Azar  
Mr. Rapoza ~ Dr. Azar  
Mrs. Terry ~ Dr. Azar

Mr. Andrade changed his vote to Dr. Azar.

It was moved by Mr. Hebda, seconded by Mr. Barrett, and VOTED to appoint Dr. Anthony Azar as the Superintendent of Schools, beginning July 01, 2014, subject to successful negotiations with the candidate and the School committee.

Dighton~Rehoboth Regional School Committee  
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Mr. Andrade ~ Aye  
Mr. Barrett ~ Aye  
Mrs. Bartholomew ~ Nay  
Mrs. Couture ~ Aye  
Mr. Hebda ~ Aye  
Mr. Katseff ~ Aye  
Mrs. Lorenz ~ Nay  
Mr. Medeiros ~ Aye  
Mr. Rapoza ~ Aye  
Mrs. Terry ~ Aye

AYE ~ 7.2    NAY ~ 1.8

MOTION PASSED

It was moved by Mr. Barrett, seconded by Mr. Katseff, and VOTED to adjourn at: 4:40 PM. Roll call vote:

Mr. Andrade ~ Aye  
Mr. Barrett ~ Aye  
Mrs. Bartholomew ~ Aye  
Mrs. Couture ~ Aye  
Mr. Hebda ~ Aye  
Mr. Katseff ~ Aye  
Mrs. Lorenz ~ Aye  
Mr. Medeiros ~ Aye  
Mr. Rapoza ~ Aye  
Mrs. Terry ~ Aye

MOTION PASSED

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*Janice Terry, Secretary*