

# Independent School District #850 School Board Minutes

ROTHSAY INDEPENDENT  
SCHOOL DISTRICT 850  
February 08, 2021  
Board of Education Regular Meeting

The Board of Education of Rothsay Independent School District 850 held its regular meeting on February 8, 2021, in the Performance Gym at the school. Board Chairman Justin Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:35 A.M. Board members John Reber, Kevin Brenden, David Simmer, Jessi Colby, and Mike Metzger were in attendance. Superintendent/Principal Wade Johnson, Elementary Principal Emily Sternberg, and District Secretary/Bookkeeper Diane Haugrud were also present at the meeting.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Superintendent Johnson read the mission statement “To prepare our students to become responsible citizens and life-long learners.”

Jessi Colby gave the board reflection for the month.

Brenden motioned to approve the agenda; Metzger provided the second. The motion unanimously carried upon vote.

Reber moved to approve both the minutes of the regular January meeting and the January 21st special meeting as presented; Simmer seconded this motion which unanimously carried upon vote. The school mailer and the Rothsay Regional Report will publish the minutes.

Reber made a motion (which carried unanimously upon vote following Colby’s second) to approve the financial reports and to authorize the fiscal agent for ISD 850 to pay accounts payable and hand payables in the following amounts: General Fund - \$196,260.76, Food Service - \$8,279.73, Community Service - \$757.62, Building Construction – \$ .00, Debt Service - \$ .00, Trust Fund - \$1,000.00, Student Activity Fund -- \$3,415.50 total - \$209,713.61.

The student activity account balance was reported as \$120,522.67.

Johnson gave the Superintendent/Principal’s report. Notable items included the need for a different vendor for the Bus Garage signage, a tentative plan to utilize February 19th as a Staff Development Day allowing faculty to receive their second dose of the COVID Vaccine, and an update on applicants

for the additional math position. The Board was informed that Graduation will be scheduled for May 28th at 7:00 pm in the school parking lot (inclement weather would delay it until May 29th at 11:00 a.m.). A credit recovery plan for academically struggling students has been implemented focusing upon individualized tutoring. Johnson also indicated that the RFT has officially submitted their Notice to Negotiate.

Johnson also gave the Activities Director report and indicated that he continues to work with the MSHSL regarding the Girls Softball Team being accepted into the Pheasant Conference with an official ruling expected soon.

The Elementary Principal’s Report was given by Mrs. Sternberg. The report highlighted the activities focused around celebrating “I Love to Read” month, delay/postponement of Donuts with Dad/Muffins with Mom, and the upcoming Elementary Conferences to be held via Zoom February 22nd and 25th. Teachers are working with Grades 3-6 on MCA test preparations. As the district’s COVID-19 coordinator, Mrs. Sternberg also provided the Board with a brief update regarding the number of students currently under quarantine.

The Technology Report was reviewed by all in attendance. It was decided to hold a Technology Committee meeting in the near future to explore possible funding options through an E-Rate application. Mr. Johnson also inquired about the possibility of purchasing two additional presentation boards with mobile carts.

The Tiny Tigers/TCC Report was included in the Board Packet and briefly discussed. Mrs. Sternberg reported that the pre-school rooms are approaching capacity, that additional grants are being requested from the state, and that administration has already started to prepare for summer staffing needs/requirements.

The Preschool Report was reviewed by all in attendance. It was reported that the district will have a much more accurate forecast of students entering Kindergarten this coming year after the conclusion of student/teacher conferences held (virtually) towards the end of the month.

No board committee meetings were held this past month.

Enrollment was reported at 279 pupils.

After a brief discussion, Director Colby moved (Metzger second) to approve the following:

**Resolution to Extend the Deadline for Leaves Granted by the Families First Coronavirus Recovery Act**

**WHEREAS**, the Families First Coronavirus Recovery Act (FFCRA) required covered employers to provide up to 80 hours of paid emergency sick leave and up to 12 weeks of partially paid expanded family and medical leave, and

**WHEREAS**, the requirement to provide said leave ended on December 31, 2020, and

**WHEREAS**, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 provides the option for covered employers to extend the deadline for eligible employees to use any unused hours/days of leaves defined in the FFCRA through March 15, 2021,

**BE IT RESOLVED**, Rothsay Public Schools shall extend the deadline for eligible employees to use any unused hours/days of the FFCRA paid emergency sick leave and partially paid expanded family and medical leave, according to the guidelines outlined in the FFCRA, through March 15, 2021.

The vote on adoption of the Resolution was recorded as follows:

In Favor: Brenden, Reber, Simmer, Metzger, Colby, Phillips

Opposed: None

Whereupon, said Resolution was declared duly adopted this 8th day of February 2021.

School Board Chair

School Board Clerk

Director Brenden introduced the following resolution and moved in favor of its adoption:

**RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE ADMINISTRATION TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POSSIBLE REDUCTIONS IN PROGRAMS AND POSITIONS AND THE REASONS THEREFOR.**

**WHEREAS**, the financial condition of the school district dictates that the school board must reduce expenditures immediately, and

**WHEREAS**, this reduction in

expenditures must include discontinuance of positions and discontinuance or curtailment of programs, and

**WHEREAS**, a determination may have to be made as to which teachers’ contracts must be reduced, terminated or not renewed and which teachers may be placed on unrequested leave of absence without pay or fringe benefits in effecting discontinuance of positions,

**BE IT RESOLVED**, by the School Board of Independent School District No. 850, as follows:

That the School Board hereby directs the Superintendent of Schools and administration to consider the discontinuance of programs or positions to effectuate economies in the school district and reduce expenditures and make recommendations to the school board for the discontinuance of programs, curtailment of programs, discontinuance of positions or curtailment of positions.

The motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Director Reber and upon vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Colby, Metzger, Simmer, Reber, Brenden, Phillips and the following voted against the same: None whereupon said resolution was declared duly passed and adopted.

February 8, 2021  
Date

Mike Metzger  
Clerk

Brenden moved to approve “Beauty and the Beast” for the 2020-2021 school year musical. Colby seconded this motion which unanimously carried on vote. Administration will work on determining an acceptable level of in-person attendance as well as option for streaming the production.

Metzger moved to approve the 2021-2022 School Calendar as presented and as a working document. Reber seconded this motion which unanimously carried upon vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 a.m.  
Mike Metzger, Clerk  
Approved March 8, 2021  
(February 22, 2021)

## Landowner Enrollment Begins For Walk-In Access

Enrollment opens for Minnesota’s Walk-In Access program, which pays private landowners to allow public hunting on their lands, has begun. This year, landowners can receive \$18 per acre enrolled. And the program is expanding to include more counties.

“We’re excited to see the program grow,” said Troy Dale, interim program supervisor. “Enrollment in the Walk-In Access program will be available for landowners in more than 50 Minnesota counties.”

Since 2011, Walk-In Access has enrolled land parcels 40 acres or larger with high-quality natural cover. The program prefers that land also be enrolled in conservation efforts, such as the Conservation Reserve Program or Reinvest in Minnesota, but that is not required.

Hunters must purchase a \$3 permit with a hunting license to access enrolled land. Walk-In Access parcels are marked with highly visible signs posted by DNR staff.

The Walk-In Access program is a win-win for hunters and landowners, Dale said. “For just a few dollars, hunters have access to nearly 30,000 acres of privately-owned land that is enrolled in the program.”



Participating hunters can access Walk-In Access land September 1 through May 31. Hunting laws are enforced by DNR conservation officers. Landowners are not required to purchase additional liability insurance.

Recreational use laws provide extra liability protection for acres enrolled in the Walk-In Access program.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has provided funding for the Walk-In Access funding through September 2023. Other funding comes from a surcharge on all nonresident hunting licenses and donations from hunters.

Landowners can sign up for the program at their local soil and water conservation district office or by contacting Troy Dale, program coordinator, at 507 537-6616.

More information is available at [mndnr.gov/walkin](http://mndnr.gov/walkin).

## Otter Tail County To Host Governor’s Fishing Opener

When anglers across Minnesota drop their lines on Saturday, May 15, Otter Tail County is committed to hosting the 2021 Minnesota Governor’s Fishing Opener in a reimaged way from the previous 70 plus years. By design, the event will be safely shaped to proceed within the guidelines of the Stay Safe MN initiative during the global pandemic.

Otter Tail County is planning to host this year’s opener celebration May 13-15, 2021. One of this year’s highlights includes a friendly virtual fishing derby on any body of water throughout Otter Tail County. With 1048 lakes, the county has a rich diversity of fishing opportunities. Lund Boats donated a new Lund 1875 Impact XS with a 150 horsepower Mercury motor, which will be raffled on May 8. Raffle tickets are at multiple locations, see [ottertailakescountry.com](http://ottertailakescountry.com) for details.

The local Otter Tail County planning committee is working with Explore Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to create a range of scenarios to celebrate the opener based on the COVID-19 situation in May. The future may be unpredictable, but Otter Tail County is committed to continuing the Governor’s Fishing Opener tradition with creativity and resolve.

The Minnesota Governor’s

Fishing Opener has been a tradition in Minnesota since 1948, designed to improve Minnesota’s economy through the development and promotion of the state’s recreational opportunities, especially fishing.

“We’re looking forward to shining a spotlight on Otter Tail County and this important fishing tradition, especially as more Minnesotans than ever have discovered the thrill of the sport,” said DNR Commissioner Sarah Strommen. “Even if the event looks a little different this year, Minnesotans can experience the best of fishing and the spirit of the opener with Otter Tail’s abundance of lakes and strong outdoor community.”

The event celebrates the kickoff of the summer tourism season in Minnesota. The special partnership continues today with a promotional focus on a host community as well as state-wide fishing and recreational opportunities.

“The annual fishing opener is a time-honored Minnesota tradition to get excited for the summer travel season,” said Explore Minnesota tourism director, John Edman. “Exploring the great outdoors in Otter Tail County and throughout the state, including fishing, road trips, hiking, biking or camping, are great ways to safely enjoy summer in Minnesota this year.”

For more information, please visit [mngovernorsopener.com](http://mngovernorsopener.com).



### A Cause Is Found...

Due to some long, hectic driving miles put in by my son Richard and wife Karen, we had made it home from Texas in about 24 hours. It had been a bone-weary marathon drive in one chunk as opposed to an overnight or two on the road. Rich did most of the driving, Karen did some and I huddled in a front seat corner of the car while the miles were put behind us.

There had been a memorable stop in Sanger, Texas where I found I was barely able to walk and unable to leap over a three-inch curb or get back into the car after I once got out. There were a variety of circumstances that took place during that stop that resulted in everybody but the local sheriff showing up to help the Yankee-Norske chubby guy get back into the car. It would have been comical if not so painful. It was a classic example of “Minnesota-nice” Texas style. We offered our insurance information but they would not hear of billing a retired fireman for their services. It was a classic example of nice guys serving their community and the public.

But it was a haggard trio that pulled into a Fargo hospital emergency room parking lot at sunrise on February 1. In a little over 24 hours I had gone from being painfully ambulatory to no longer being able to walk. It took assistance to get me transferred from the car to a gurney and then into hospital attire for further testing. I also got a liberal dose of morphine which took the edge off the pain and made me at least a small participant in the treatment.

Richard had pushed himself to the limit on the drive home. He was shot. He needed sleep more than any of us. He agreed to go to our house and get a few winks. Karen, however, refused to leave. She gave Rich instructions on what clothing to bring back with him and she settled in to “mother-hen” me and watch over the treatment and testing I was about to receive.

First on the list was further testing to deduce what was actually wrong with me and what could be done to correct the rapid decline in my health. It had been two and a half pain-filled months since the original injury produced in a fall on a Colorado elk hunt. That time had been painful but I was able to walk and get around. In about 10 days I had gone from erect posture to horizontal. I was no longer able to walk.

The first of the testing involved more x-rays of the back with me in a horizontal position. That was an extremely painful position and produced the same results as the x-rays in Colorado, Barnesville, Fergus Falls, North Padre Island, Texas and now Fargo, North Dakota. There was nothing broken and no reason that I should be in this much pain. Whoooopie! . . . Hallelujah brother, contact Oral Roberts. . . Except for the pain, I must be healed.

Actually, it was not that easy or simple. Finding nothing on the x-rays, which I would have given them terrific odds on, they now moved on to Plan B. How about a Mylogram? . . . And what, pray (prey) tell, is a Mylogram?

Well, friends and neighbors, a Mylogram is a sophisticated (translates into high priced) version of an MRI scan. Except it’s for wimps such as myself who have had a bunch of scrap metal inserted into the chest and heart. Due to my heart Pacemaker, I was not eligible for the MRI which had the potential to have various parts scattered all across the room, after the metal shrapnel had been pulled from my chest by the magnets.

When this was explained to me, the Mylogram sounded like a really jolly good deal. Where do I sign up?

The Mylogram was done in a different building so transportation had to be arranged. That was a treat as I was rustled and jostled into a minivan for transport to the facility. Actually the ride was a good reminder of what was lying in store for me with the Mylogram . . . more pain.

The Mylogram is done in a pose very similar to a horizontal x-ray or cat-scan. Except it took a lot longer and they ran you through a tight tube to get full benefit from this procedure. . . . Morphine is good in this condition. Hello, old friend. . . .

Morphine and whatever other pain killer they were giving me helped me make it through the Mylogram procedure. Now, nearly a year later, the nightmares, night sweats and genuine terror inflicted by this type of a scan has mostly faded away. I am back to what passes for normal . . . at least for me.

Most of the testing and scanning was done on the first or second day I was hospitalized in Fargo. There was little to distinguish one test from the next except to try to judge the pain by the happy to grumpy faces to really distressed faces to which they had attached numbers.

“It hurts like hell,” was apparently not the correct response. They wanted a number. Since the numbering system only went as high as 10, it was difficult to give them an accurate description. It finally seemed like, after tapping me for a gallon or so, they no longer needed my blood. The contortionists that ran the various scans seemed to be satisfied. They had gotten me to a place where I was at least complacent if not comfortable.

Then came a revelation from one of the miracle workers who had been conducting various torture techniques on me. He huddled up real close and explained to me, “Eugene, you have a very serious situation here.” I knew we were not friends since he called me “Eugene”.

Few if anybody had called me that over most of a lifetime spent here on this earth. My mother, when she was extremely upset with me, usually for no reason at all, would call me by my full first, middle and last name, all at once. You knew there was trouble afoot by that time. To everyone else, I have always been simply “Gene”.

But I cared little about what they called me. I just wanted to be fixed and back on my feet again.

My new friend said, “Eugene, you have a very serious problem here. Here’s the good news. Your old break in your lower back does not appear to be causing you any problems. The arthritis you have throughout your back is probably not comfortable but nothing we would not suspect in a man of your age. That also applies to the worn out vertebrae that have mostly ground themselves out. The bad news, however, is that you have a broken back!”

