

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Special Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2019

Board Members in Attendance: President Van Henri White, Commissioner Elizabeth Hallmark, Commissioner Beatriz LeBron, Commissioner Willa Powell, and Commissioner Natalie Sheppard.

Board Members Excused: Vice President Cynthia Elliott and Commissioner Judith Davis.

Administration and Board Officers in Attendance: Superintendent Barbara Deane-Williams, General Counsel Karl Kristoff, and District Clerk Shanai Lee.

- I. President White convened the meeting at 12:10 p.m.
- II. **Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item**
No speakers present.
- III. **Discussion of the Board's Response to the Distinguished Educator's Report**
Members of the Board discussed and commented on the following recommendations of the Distinguished Educator's report:
 2. Ensure that the Board prioritizes its focus on improving student achievement by:
 - a. Giving responsibility to the Board President to focus all discussions and decisions on the achievement of a vision and strategy for improving student outcomes.
 - b. Having the Board and Superintendent develop a set of leading and lagging indicators to monitor student performance that align with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requirements. Progress in these should be monitored on regularly.
 - c. Having the Board make financial decisions that align with an adopted strategic plan supporting improvement of student outcomes.
 3. Implement a system by which the Board holds the Superintendent accountable.
 - a. Develop a clear written evaluation process for the Superintendent. The Board must set specific and measurable goals at the beginning of the year. These must be regularly monitored, with adherence to evaluation timelines.
 - b. Implement a process by which the Board President and the Superintendent have regular, formal, scheduled meetings to discuss District business and provide feedback and guidance regarding Board expectations.
 4. Streamline the number of Board meetings.
 - a. Research how other boards operate to learn best practices.
 - b. Partner with the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) or similar entity to conduct a review of the Board's current organizational structure with the goal of improving decision-making while reducing the number of and time spent

by staff and Board Commissioners participating in and preparing for such meetings.

5. Implement a system of induction for new Commissioners.
 - a. Develop a mentoring program for new Commissioners with the assistance of NYSSBA or a similar entity.
 - b. Task the Board President with monitoring this program and ensuring that all new Commissioners participate and meet all state requirements.
 - c. Have district leadership conduct orientation meetings for new Commissioners to brief them on the work of the District.
6. Ensure the Board President plays an active role in managing the Board as a whole by:
 - a. Leading the Board in developing a procedure for conducting a Board continuous improvement process.
 - b. Taking an active leadership role in guiding the Board as it chooses indicators as well as implements a Board self-assessment process.
 - c. Scheduling regular, formal, standing meetings with the Superintendent to discuss District business, including feedback and guidance regarding Board expectations.
 - d. Having regular one-on-one meetings with fellow Commissioners.
 - e. Ensuring that the Board receives proper professional development.
7. Have the Board reassess its policy pertaining to Advisory Committees and Task Forces and be encouraged whenever possible to have such committees and task forces report to and be overseen by the Superintendent.
8. Develop a comprehensive process by which the Board identifies the most qualified candidate when there is a transition in superintendents.¹⁴
 - a. Seek input from parents, staff, community groups, elected officials, and other community stakeholders about the qualities they would like to see in a new superintendent.
 - b. Develop candidate competencies and characteristics based on the specific needs of the District, with student achievement data as the main driver.
 - c. Be as transparent as possible when implementing this process.
9. Develop a multi-year strategic plan to serve as a road map guiding work throughout the system. Components of the plan should include: Teaching and Learning, Interventions, Support for Special Populations, Human Capital, Parent and Community Engagement, Socio- Emotional Support, Building System Capacity, Intelligent Accountability, Operations, Funding, and Sustainability.
 - a. Develop a detailed five-year strategic plan to drive the work of the District. Below is a process to consider while developing the strategic plan:
 - i. Have a small group of staff use data to develop a draft plan.

- ii. Assemble a representative group of all stakeholders (Board, school and District administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, parents, community groups, business community, faith groups, elected officials, etc.) to provide feedback on the plan.
 - iii. Have the Board approve plan.
 - iv. Develop a communication plan to ensure the entire city understands and embraces the strategic plan.
 - v. Create an independent, citizen-based Community Alliance to serve as an advisory group to the Board and Superintendent. The Alliance will give feedback on implementation of the adopted plan. This Alliance will also advocate for District- level decisions, policies, and approaches to improve student achievement. A primary responsibility of this group will be to ensure that the District stays the course as set forth in the adopted plan through any changes that occur in Board and District leadership.
 - b. Have the Board focus on and support implementation of the plan as the Board also develops a mechanism to hold present and future superintendents responsible for implementation.
10. Develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan aimed at promoting the achievement of the District's goals.
- a. Implement a communications strategy that encourages the presentation of facts, no matter how negative, while also sharing successes, and promoting stronger relationships with all stakeholders.
 - b. Include in the plan two strands focused on how to improve internal and external communications.
 - c. Include in the plan evaluation methods and a timeline for implementation.
11. Develop a system to support schools as they engage in a comprehensive process to write school improvement plans. These plans should go beyond mere compliance and aim for real improvement in student outcomes.
- a. Provide professional guidance to school planning committee teams as they implement a continuous improvement process. This process must provide clear direction for all efforts to improve conditions that support student learning.
 - b. Develop a peer feedback process where schools can learn from each other about how to better meet the needs of their students.
 - c. Ensure that school Chiefs play an active role in supporting, reviewing, approving, and monitoring the school plans.

Commissioner Sheppard left at 12:50 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.