

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Business Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2019

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

Administration and Board Officers in Attendance: Superintendent Shaun Nelms, General Counsel Karl Kristoff, Interim Chief of Staff Linda Cimusz, and Acting Clerk Francine Scott.

President White convened the meeting at 6:05p.m.

I. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Kallia Wade

II. Acceptance of Minutes:
None

III. No Speakers Addressing and Agenda Item

IV. Speakers Not Addressing an Agenda Item
Community member, Julio Vicente acknowledged Interim Superintendent Dan Lowengard recent hospitalization with warm thoughts of a speedy recovery and good health.

V. Superintendent Report
Superintendent Nelms started his presentation thanking Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, Dr. Golden, for continued collaboration on curriculum. This year will be the first cohort of students that started as freshmen and now are seniors ready to graduate. The EPO has been in existence for four years and started with a 31% graduation rate in 2014 and the graduation increased by 33% by August 2015. In celebration of Black History Month, East is featuring a new theme, "Through Our Eyes." including fraternities and sororities talking about their role in black colleges on February 26th at 10:15 a.m. at East High School. Dr. Nelms also invited all to attend East Hip Hop Celebration February 15th at 2:45 p.m., adding that the Hip Hop course was created two years ago with assistance from Dr. Larson with the University of Rochester. The course is student driven, operated and produced by students and it is a credited course. Dr. Nelms also shared lower level students participated in Restorative Practices by way of Peer Mediation Training where the students could facilitate peer mediations. Dr. Nelms indicated that students in 7th and 8th grade toured the campus at the U of R to get a feel of what college looks like. William and Sheila Konar Foundation have funded the college tours for the last two years. Dr. Nelms hopes to extend the college tours to all students in the District. Lastly, Dr. Nelms thanked Lorna Washington for her hard work with Community Schools.

VI. Carleen Pearce, East CFO presented the financial update. East had a reduction of thirteen teachers and two support staff positions in 2018-19 based on efficient master scheduling and enrollment projections. Total compensation expense as of January 31st was \$317,867 and Cash Capital Outlay Expenditures were \$100,091. The change was due to installation of a new sound system in the auditorium and building maintenance issues. In addition, use of digital platforms rather than paper caused a reduction of \$39,084. Miscellaneous and all other expenditures was \$161,843 due to a reduction in utilization of external vendors and the use of grant funding to offset professional and technical services. Ms. Pearce concluded that East is in a positive financial position, and anticipates that East would return unexpended funds to the District. Commissioner Powell moved to approve the financial reports for East high School, Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 7-0.

VII. Review of Diversity Recruitment and Hiring Initiatives

Vice President Elliott facilitated the District's Diversity Recruitment by first thanking Chief of Human Resources, Harry Kennedy, for putting together information to review to recruitment information. She also stated with budget constraints, there could be layoffs. In addition, Vice President Elliott stated there has to be a way to retain people who are in front of students that represent our students. Mr. Kennedy started his presentation on the District's Diversity Recruitment by stating there is a systemic national issue that has influenced the entire country and every public school district. He indicated, the current state of the NYS Department of Education's report, shows a shortage of teachers across the country. The racial makeup shows elementary and secondary school teachers' workforce does not match the diversity of students or the population at large. He further added, while students of color are expected to make up 56% of the student population by 2024, the teaching population remains overwhelmingly white. Mr. Kennedy shared a few key strategic initiatives that have been implemented to include:

- Development that focuses on the commitment to hire a racially, ethnically, and a culturally diverse group of highly effective employees;
- Modify offer letters to ensure that one of the preconditions of hiring for all new employees include the applicant attending an Implicit Bias Workshop,
- Partnership with the Multilingual Department of Teaching and Learning, NYSED and SUNY Brockport to develop a pathway of certification for Bilingual Teachers.

Mr. Kennedy also spoke about being compliant with the Distinguished Educator's Report and stated one Key Strategic Initiative is the Human Resources partnership with the Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning, and School Chiefs to develop a comprehensive Professional Development program to help central office, teachers, paraprofessionals, and support staff meet the needs of students. Mr. Kennedy concluded his presentation stating that the Human Resources Department has placed a target focus on African American and Bilingual applicants and offered to do a presentations at a another meeting.

Commissioner LeBron wanted suggestions on how to retain African American and Latino staff that are last hired and are the first to be dismissed. General Counsel Karl Kristoff stated that there is a misconception that last hired is the first to go, stating, this has

nothing to do with the union contract. It is required under a section of Education Law 2510, which is a statutory matter where unions cannot waive; unions are not empowered to agree to anything that would contradict provisions of Education Law 2510. Vice President Elliott stated there should be further discussion around this topic and acknowledged working together to negotiate with unions is important. Commissioner LeBron indicated that some States grant special protection to African American and Latino teachers based on the number of students they are serving and the shortage of teachers in their District. She also mentioned it is important to figure out a way to implement some of the same protections for teachers who are not certified in Special Education, ELA, and Bilingual. Commissioner Powell stated there might be assumptions that state aid is not going to help close the budget gap. Commissioner LeBron pointed out that the District is facing a budget deficit and it would be an impact to staff.

President White expressed the order in which the board meetings must flow with the Commissioner who is facilitating the topic to acknowledge the Commissioner that would like to speak. Commissioner Sheppard stated the presentations should not be rushed, as important information is being shared. Vice President Elliott expressed more time would be needed to discuss certain agenda items, perhaps 30 minutes if not more.

Commissioner Davis also indicated having the presentation prior to the meeting would allow time to review and propose questions prior to the meeting. Commissioner Powell also suggested putting a timeframe on the agenda, as well as approving the agenda then modify it if needed. Mr. Kristoff also explained that corresponding in an email about general information to the Clerk does not constitute a meeting to transact business. President White encouraged Commissioners who are facilitating during the meeting to inform Dr. Lee how much time they would need to address their topic of discussion and it would be included on the agenda.

VIII. Review of 2019-20 Board Retreat Sessions Calendar (Professional Development Plan)

Commissioner Hallmark created a document with the action items as outlined on the Distinguished Educator's Report and asked the Commissioners to put their name alongside the action item they would like to take the lead on. She also mentioned that quarterly board retreats should align with Dr. Aquino's report to Commissioner Elia, which are February, April, July and October. President White reiterated that a Project Manager might be necessary to assist with monitoring the process. Commissioner Sheppard recommended the use of an electronic system so we could work together collectively.

IX. BOE Audit Committee Report

Commissioner LeBron stated that the next Audit Committee Meeting is Tuesday, March 5, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. She stated that there were previous reports that were not officially adopted. Commissioner LeBron also stated she would send the reports to the other Commissioners for review but could not give feedback on work that had already done. She said that she would not be voting and encouraged Commissioners' Davis and Sheppard not to vote as well, since they were not Commissioners at the time. Commissioner LeBron also shared that the Rochester Rotary Club reached out to her about old textbooks and gifting them to third world countries. Commissioner LeBron says there is no current policy with direction for how to disseminate textbooks nor is their clear

direction on donating books to parents, teachers, and community members. The textbooks clerks' position is no longer in existence and there is no procedure in place to distribute books. She also stated the District uses Common Core and the books would not align with the current instruction. Commissioner LeBron suggested making a motion in form of a resolution to donate textbooks and create a policy on how to make the decision to gift old books. Mr. Kristoff suggested that the District staff identify the books for donation and bring a resolution to the Board to gift the books. Vice President Elliott stated she would like a presentation from the Rotary Club and all students should have the books they need, as Commissioner LeBron agreed. President White stated he would like to clarify if there is a process in place for inventory. Commissioner LeBron says the Auditor General, Anissa Henry-Wheeler, can do a presentation since she did the investigation. President White says this should not end with Audit, but administration should address the issue. Commissioner LeBron says Mr. Kristoff is working with Auditor General Henry-Wheeler and she would have the policy emailed within the next couple of weeks.

X. Resolutions

2018-19: 641: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner LeBron. Seconded by Commissioner Davis. Adopted 7-0.

2018-19: 642: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Davis. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 5-2 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner LeBron dissenting.

2018-19: 643: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Vice President Elliott. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Sheppard dissenting.

Motion to go into executive session to discuss a matter related to the employment of a particular person made by Commissioner Hallmark, and seconded by Vice President Elliott at 7:53 p.m. Motion carries 7-0.

Motion to reconvene in open session made by Commissioner Hallmark, seconded by Commissioner Davis at 10:10 p.m. Motion carries 7-0.

XI. Meeting to adjourn by Commissioner Hallmark, seconded by Commissioner Davis at 10:10 p.m. Motion carries 7-0.