

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Contract for Excellence Public Hearing and
2009-10 Budget Public Hearing
April 6, 2009

Minutes

Attendance: President Evans, Commissioners Brennan, Elliott, Powell, Williams. Superintendent Jean-Claude Brizard, Chief of Staff Kim Dyce-Faucette, Deputy Superintendent of Administration John Scanlan, General Counsel Charles Johnson, Mary Doyle, and Board Clerk Shanai Lee.

I. President Evans convened the hearing on the Contract for Excellence at 6:02 p.m.

President Evans asked that anyone who would like to speak on the Contract for Excellence to please come to the podium.

There were no speakers present at this hearing.

Motion to adjourn the hearing on the Contract for Excellence was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner Elliott. Adopted 5-0 at 6:04 p.m. with Commissioners Campos and White absent.

II. President Evans convened the hearing on the 2009-10 Budget at 6:05 p.m.

Superintendent Brizard said the District has posted the proposed 2009-10 Budget on the District website. He also stated that when the final budget has been approved, the District will make hard copies of the budget book available to the community for a nominal fee.

President Evans asked if anyone would like to speak on the 2009-10 Budget.

Diane Watkins

Ms. Watkins stated that teachers are important to the learning environment and expressed concern about the proposed reduction in teachers. She stated that the reduction in the number of teachers is poised to be a way of distracting the community away from the wasteful spending of the District; in particular, the excessive amounts of Additional Pay Resolutions that the Board has approved over the past several years. Ms. Watkins stated that she doubted that administrators were physically unable to work the number of hours that they were compensated for by Additional Pay Resolutions. She also expressed concern about principals being able to select their own staff.

Charlie Richardson

Mr. Richardson stated that he has not yet reviewed the proposed 2009-10 Budget in its entirety. He stated that the District's efforts in saving money on costs related to transportation by re-routing are good. He also noted how impressive the turnout was at the Academic Showcase. Mr. Richardson stated that parents often choose schools for their children based on the availability of transportation. He said these actions, along with the District's practice to allow parents to select schools, prohibit the community from building strong neighborhoods. Mr. Richardson said the money saved on transportation should go towards purchasing more resources for classrooms such as SMART Boards and other computer equipment.

Lori Thomas

Ms. Thomas stated that she has several concerns on the proposed 2009-10 Budget and intends to forward her concerns and questions to the Board, Superintendent, Mayor, Rochester Teachers Association, and other members of the community. She said the budget lacks in depth, transparency, and accountability.

Glenny Williams

Mr. Williams stated that studies prove that smaller class sizes enhance the learning environment and he expressed concern about Superintendent Brizard's efforts to increase class sizes by reducing the number of teachers in the District. He said the District's students and teachers have benefitted from smaller class sizes. Mr. Williams stated that the community would like processes that are more transparent. He noted that the community would have liked more input into District practices related to in-school suspensions and the Contract for Excellence.

President Evans thanked the speakers for their comments and announced the future schedule of budget meetings.

Motion to adjourn the hearing on the 2009-10 Budget was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 5-0 at 6:23 p.m. with Commissioners Campos and White absent.