

DRAFT; NOT APPROVED BY BOARD

Rochester Board of Education
2008-09 Budget Public Hearing
April 21, 2008

Minutes

Attendance: President Evans, Vice President White, Commissioners Campos, Elliott, Powell and Williams. Commissioner Brennan arrived 6:15 p.m. Commissioner Campos arrived 6:30 p.m. Superintendent Jean-Claude Brizard, Board Clerk Linda Dunsmoor.

President Evans convened the hearing on the Contract for Excellence at 6:03 p.m.

There were no speakers on that topic.

President Evans convened the hearing on the 2008-09 proposed budget at 6:04 p.m.

Charles Richardson spoke in support of neighborhood schools in that it would help increase parent involvement and eliminate long bus rides for students. He said that 70 percent of the students at School 20 are bused in; 3 percent live in the neighborhood and 20 percent are brought to school by their parents. Mr. Richardson also said parent are happy with Superintendent Brizard and think that he is wonderful.

Lori Thomas asked about Board of Education salaries and whether a COLA increase is applied. Commissioner Williams said any COLA increase is for Board staff, not for Commissioners. Commissioner Powell explained a resolution approved in 2005 that tied Commissioner salaries to City Council salaries as a percentage.

Ms. Thomas asked about the Department of Law and an 8 percent increase in salaries, questioning why when in her opinion the department is not doing its job of ensuring the District is in compliance with state and federal law.

Ms. Thomas also asked that figures be provided regarding the difference between the proposed budget, the amended budget and the actual budget. If the amended figures are higher, where does the money come from and where does it go; if the amended figures are lower, where are the funding cuts.

Ms. Thomas asked specifically about Section 14, p. 49: School Development and Academics. Why is there a \$74,000 increase in advertising and a \$167,000 cut in supplies, etc.

Commissioner White asked how Ms. Thomas' questions would be answered. President Evans said Board Staff Ms. Washington was capturing the questions. Director of Budget Vern Connors said he will provide answers to Board Staff Ms. Washington, who will distribute them.

Ms. Thomas asked about Section 12, p. 9 and funding for the Department of African and African-American Studies and the Rochester Children's Zone liaison position. Commissioner Powell responded that funding is accounted for in other parts of the budget; Superintendent Brizard said the funding is in place.

Ms. Thomas asked about Section 14, p. 75, the salary and increase. Superintendent Brizard said the figures include benefits.

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Ms. Thomas asked about the process for the new budget. Commissioner Powell said all information, including new figures from New York State, will be reconciled in the final draft submitted to the Board for approval May 8.

President Evans noted that residents can comment on the budget or any other topic at Business Meetings also.

Ms. Thomas asked about the function of the Law Department. Commissioners Elliott and White explained that ASAR provides legal services to its members; the Law Department does not.

Ms. Thomas said that concluded her questions.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner White. Approved 7-0 at 6:31 p.m.