

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Special Meeting Minutes
May 6, 2014

Attendance: President White and Commissioners Adams, Campos, Cruz, Evans, and Powell. Superintendent Vargas and Board Clerk Shanai Lee.

I. Call to Order

President White convened the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

II. Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item

Community member, James Dunphy, spoke about the value of vocational education and asked the Board to consider implementing educational programming to provide career pathways, in particular career and technical education, for students at East High School.

III. Discussion of Options for East High School

President White announced the options that the Board will explore in addressing the transformation of East High School, including a proposal from School Turnaround, Inc. to serve as an Educational Partnership Organization (EPO) for East High School, an option to phase-out the current school program and phase-in programming that is sufficiently different from the existing program, and other options before the Board to address the transformation and management of East High School.

Dr. Vargas presented his proposal to phase out and replace the current school. He noted that students currently enrolled in the phase-out school can transfer to a higher performing school, and all interested and qualified students at East High School will have the ability to attend BOCES programs. In discussing the phase out option, Dr. Vargas noted that he will request additional time for planning to ensure a successful school turnaround with strengthened academic support and CTE opportunities for students. Other elements of the proposal presented by Dr. Vargas include: individualized learning plans with clear paths to graduation, expanded CTE opportunities to make learning relevant, increased time for instruction and professional development, new services for special education students, small learning communities, career-readiness curriculum, and more expanded extra-curricular activities. Dr. Vargas also spoke about the supports that will be offered to administrators and teaching staff to foster a culture of high achievement.

President White acknowledged members of the East High School community that served on the special committee to review and evaluate the Educational Partnership Organization (EPO) proposal received from School Turnaround, Inc. He noted that the Board will consider the proposal in developing the final plan for East High School to submit to the State Education Department.

President White spoke about another option for the transformation of East High School. He stated that the Board had recently received a letter of intent from the President of the University of Rochester, Joel Seligman, which expresses the University's commitment to submit a proposal to serve as the EPO for East High School. He asked that the Board consider sending a letter to the State Education Department to request additional time to provide an opportunity for the University to

conduct the analysis and planning necessary to develop a comprehensive and credible plan for your consideration. President White read aloud suggested language for the letter and requested a motion to submit the letter to the State Education Department. Commissioner Powell made a motion to send the letter, and seconded by Commissioner Evans. The Board agreed to submit a letter to the State Education Department with a vote 6-0 with Vice President Elliott absent.

Members of the Board reassured the community that the Board has not yet made a final decision on the future of East High School and commended the Superintendent and his staff for their work in communicating with students, families and staff. The Board also articulated the need for community involvement in addressing the needs of East High Schools and other schools throughout the District.

Commissioner Powell left at 7:00 p.m.

IV. Executive Session

Motion to enter into executive session to discuss matters related to the employment of specific individuals made by Commissioner Cruz at 7:24 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Motion carries 6-0 with Vice President Elliott absent.

Commissioner Powell arrived at 7:25 p.m.

Motion to enter into open session made by Commissioner Campos at 9:00 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Powell. Motion carries 6-0 with Vice President Elliott absent.

V. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Powell at 9:00 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 6-0 with Vice President Elliott absent.