

Rochester Board of Education
Special Meeting
May 8, 2008
6 p.m.

Attendance: President Evans, Vice President White, Commissioners Campos, Elliott, Powell and Williams; Superintendent Jean-Claude Brizard; Board Clerk Linda Dunsmoor. Commissioner Brennan absent because of family emergency.

President Evans convened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

1. Commissioner Campos led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Motion to approve Finance Committee Meeting of Whole of April 28 by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Brennan absent.
3. President Evans thanked Commissioner Powell, the Finance Committee, and all commissioners for exercising their due diligence during the 2008-09 budget process. Superintendent Brizard commented that the Board had submitted wonderful and thoughtful questions, really pushing administration to consider achievement data when making funding recommendations. He also thanked the Business Services team for its hard work, as well as the academic chiefs and the four unions for their support. He noted that a 'Citizens Budget' will be provided next year in order to make the process more transparent.

President Evans invited speaker Charlie Richardson to the podium, who discussed transportation costs and the school choice policy, parent participation, and the cost of fuel. He added that the community has hope because it sees the Board pulling together and a superintendent they can believe in.

Motion to approve Resolution 2007-08: 659, the 2008-09 RCSD Budget, by Commissioner White. Second by Commissioner Powell.

Discussion:

Commissioner Powell said she had no objections to the budget, but wanted to emphasize her comments regarding meeting industry standards for the square footage to full-time equivalent (fte) maintenance staff ratios. She also thanked staff for their efforts during four deliberations sessions and two public hearings.

Commissioner Campos asked for clarification regarding Reading First. Superintendent Brizard noted that the federal government funding for the program declined by \$2.4M and said there are pros and cons to any program. The programs are a tool, not a panacea and should serve as a framework so that people use proven strategies with struggling readers. The District needs to look at coherent instruction across schools because of student mobility. Completely removing the program would be disruptive to students but the program is being studied.

DRAFT; NOT APPROVED BY BOARD

Commissioner White thanked District staff, particularly Chief Financial Officer Vincent Carfagna and Budget Director Vernon Connors. He also noted the efforts of Board staff Hazel Washington as well as the leadership of Commissioner Powell. He commended Superintendent Brizard for his good work.

Commissioner Elliott said she has concerns about the budget, namely that less than \$12M is dedicated to classrooms for supplies and materials and that 70 percent of the budget is devoted to personnel costs. Commissioner Elliott said teachers do not have the resources or supplies they need, including textbooks. She does not approve of paying certain employees up to \$25K for unused sick time or secretary salaries that range up to \$90K, particularly in light of the money being spent in classrooms. The Board is being irresponsible with taxpayer dollars, particularly with exorbitant salaries but a 39 percent graduation rate. She will vote No on the budget.

Hearing no other comments, President Evans called for a roll-call vote:

Commissioner Campos:	Yes
Commissioner Elliott:	No
Commissioner White:	Yes
Commissioner Powell:	Yes
Commissioner Williams:	Yes
President Evans:	Yes

Resolution 2007-08: 659 adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Brennan absent.

4. Motion to enter executive session to discuss litigation by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner White. Adopted 6-0 at 6:21 p.m.

Commissioner Elliott left at 7:38 p.m.

Motion to adjourn executive session and return to open session by Commissioner White. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 5-0 at 7:51 p.m. with Commissioners Brennan and Elliott absent. Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner White. Adopted 5-0 with Commissioners Brennan and Elliott absent at 7:51 p.m.