

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Business Meeting
May 18, 2006
Minutes

Present: Commissioners Brennan, Elliott, Evans, Garcia, Henley, and Powell; Superintendent Dr. Rivera; Student Representative Ms. Simmonds.

Absent: Commissioner Thompson (out of town)

President convened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Act of Reverence led by Commissioner Evans.

Discussion

Motion by Commissioner Evans to accept minutes of April 13, May 1 and May 10, 2006, Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting and Commissioner Thompson absent.

Speakers addressing an Agenda Item

None

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Rivera said he is confident that the district can reach closure soon on a new location for School 54. He has met with all stakeholders and believes their needs can be met more than satisfactorily. He will provide the Board with more information, including the terms of any lease, etc., and may ask that a special meeting be scheduled. He met with representatives of the New York State Department of Education earlier regarding the District's Adult Education Department, which earned very positive remarks. Legislation for the Facilities Modernization Plan is being drafted and reviewed; it is poised for submittal to the State Legislature in time for approval before the end of the session. The registration deadline for 2006-07 Kindergarten was extended by a week; the District believes that only about 50 percent of students had registered. Dr. Rivera will provide a final report next week. The Rochester Children's Zone (RCZ) is moving from concept to design and will have a major kickoff event on Saturday, June 24 at Dr. Freddie Thomas High School.

Commissioner Elliott asked Superintendent Rivera a question about the cost of the Rochester Children's Zone compared to the cost of the Harlem Children's Zone. If the Harlem Children's Zone budget is \$34 million for 7,000 kids, how do you raise and sustain a total of \$68 million, since the cost would have to double for 16,000 kids who reside in the catchment area for Rochester Children's Zone? Responding to Commissioner Elliott, Dr. Rivera said the RCZ is not an exact replica of the Harlem Children's Zone; it will serve 4,000 to 5,000 students in six schools initially and funding strategies will be identified as part of design process.

Responding to Commissioner Henley, Dr. Rivera said the School 54 relocation process is very much a team effort and assured Commissioner Henley that parents, teachers, and administrators are involved in the process.

Committee Reports

Student Representative Report, Ms. Simmonds: The Student Leadership Congress's year-end celebration is June 7; six student volunteers, Ms. Jarzyniecki and Mr. Petronio (Department of Communications and Public Engagement) participated in Clean Sweep yesterday on Anderson Street.

Finance Committee, Commissioner Powell: Five resolutions have been reviewed and are being recommended (783-787). The committee's next meeting is June 8.

Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee, Commissioner Evans: A new talk show featuring students has debuted on WDKX; priorities of the Council of Great City Schools include funding issues and vocational education. The Rev. Jesse Jackson is proposing that education become a right guaranteed by the constitution.

Board Governance Committee, Commissioner Henley: Impacts from the Board Retreat May 6 will be parsed at the next committee meeting on May 30; he offered a note of appreciation to School 45 Principal Vickie Gouveia for the 'Day of Caring' event at which Penfield High School students worked inside and outside of the building with Commissioner Henley.

Quality Assurance Committee, Commissioner Elliott: Although Quality Assurance recommended it and the full Board approved it, Quality Assurance reported that members have reservations regarding the new Social Studies textbooks for Grades 3-5. A photo taken from the book was displayed; the depiction of Colonial Williamsburg included two smiling African Americans dressed as slaves. The picture sends the wrong message.

Policy Committee, Commissioner Brennan: The committee will meet May 25 for a public hearing on the 2006-07 proposed Code of Conduct and to host a discussion on apprenticeship opportunities provided by construction contractors working with the district. At that meeting the committee will also set a June meeting date.

Audit Committee, President Garcia: The new Audit Committee will include three commissioners and two volunteer financial professionals; Charter was approved by committee and will be sent to full Board in Friday packet; introduction of new Auditor General Anissa Henry-Wheeler. Motion to approve committee members appointed by President Garcia made by Commissioner Powell, second by Commissioner Evans. Approved 6-0. Audit Committee members are Commissioners Evans, Powell and Thompson. The other two committee members are being recruited and will be named later.

Consideration of Resolutions

President Garcia asked for a motion to adopt Resolutions 2005-06: 748-52. Motion by Commissioner Evans, Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Thompson absent.

President Garcia asked for a motion to adopt Resolutions 2005-06: 753-772. Motion by Commissioner Brennan, Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 except for 653 (adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Evans abstaining and Commissioner Thompson absent) and 763, 764, 770, 771 and 772 (adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting and Commissioner Thompson absent).

President Garcia asked for a motion to adopt Resolutions 2005-06: 773-780. Motion by Commissioner Henley, Second by Commissioner Evans. Resolution 773 adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting and Commissioner Thompson absent. Resolutions 774-780 adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Thompson absent.

President Garcia asked for a motion to adopt Resolutions 2005-06: 781-82. Motion by Commissioner Powell, Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting and Commissioner Thompson absent. Commissioner Elliott said M/WBE (Minority/Women Business Enterprise) information should be included in resolutions.

President Garcia asked for a motion to adopt Resolutions 2005-06: 783-813. Motion by Commissioner Evans, Second by Commissioner Henley. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Thompson absent except for 783, 789, 790-91, and 793-807, which were adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting and Commissioner Thompson absent.

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business:

Commissioner Elliott thanked District staff who attended the Baden Street Settlement's celebration, which featured Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu. Dr. Rivera noted that his staff was so impressed with Dr. Kunjufu that he is being invited to work with the District in June to review the District's plans, offer guidance, and address the school-based planning teams.

Commissioner Brennan asked District Counsel Michael Looby to discuss a proposed technical amendment to Policy 1510; and to discuss proposed amendments for the proposed 2006-07 version of Policy 5300, the annual Code of Conduct reauthorization. Both had been approved by the Policy Committee for forwarding to the full Board, and are now before the Board for consideration. The technical amendment to Policy 1510 -- a wording change in one section of the existing policy -- is being proposed upon recommendation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). New York's Project SAVE legislation requires that the Board approve a Code of Conduct annually, following a public hearing, which is scheduled for May 25th. Commissioner Powell discussed the recommendation to change the monthly date of the Board's Business Meeting from the third Thursday of the month to the fourth Thursday. Commissioner Powell said the move would allow for greater functionality of the Department of Business Services and the Board Finance Committee as well as provide additional time for the Board to review the resolutions. Commissioner Evans said he can only support the measure if it provides more time for review. President Garcia said he failed to see the advantage; the move provides additional time for the Board but not for staff preparation.

Speakers on other than Agenda Items:

Several students, parents and staff members spoke in favor of the JROTC program.

Several community members spoke against the program.

Staff from School 50 spoke about funding for special education.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Evans, Second by Commissioner Henley. Adopted 6-0 at 8:20 p.m.