

Rochester Board of Education Business Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2006

Attendance

President Garcia, Vice President Evans, Commissioners Brennan, Henley, Powell and Thompson.
Commissioner Elliott absent.

President Garcia convened the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

Commissioner Evans led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to have the topic of JROTC put on the agenda as a discussion item.
Motion seconded by Commissioner Brennan.

Commissioner Powell offered an amendment to the motion that JROTC be sustained for the next three years.
No second.

Commissioner Evans recommended that JROTC be added under “New Business” just before adjournment.

Commissioner Thompson accepted the recommendation in recognition of the students in the audience and the large number of JROTC speakers.

Roll call vote:

Commissioner Brennan	Yes
Commissioner Henley	Yes
Vice President Evans	Yes
Commissioner Powell	Yes
Commissioner Thompson	Yes
President Garcia	Yes

Carried 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

Superintendent’s Report

Dr. Rivera discussed academic achievement gains and showed a video produced to showcase Wilson Magnet High School, which was recognized at the 24th top high school in the country by *Newsweek* magazine. Principal Marilyn Patterson-Grant was honored for her school’s achievement and was provided with a plaque from Dr. Rivera recognizing the accomplishment. Vice President Evans, a Wilson alum, gave Ms. Patterson-Grant a proclamation from Rochester Mayor Robert Duffy proclaiming June 15, 2006 as “Wilson Magnet High School Day” because of the achievement and contribution to the community.

Dr. Rivera also discussed the appointment of principals to two College Board high schools that will be initiated this summer, with doors opening to students in September 2006. He recognized Helen Santiago and Dr. Edna Vega of The College Board, who are working with the District to establish the schools.

June 24 is the kick-off for The Children's Zone. Sen. Louise Slaughter has secured \$400,000 in federal funding to support The Children's Zone planning process. State Sen. Joseph Robach has secured \$50,000, and also contributing to the effort are The United Way, Richard Sands/Constellation Brands, and others. Dr. Rivera anticipates a solid planning process with this funding in place.

Gary Simon Award

Marian Coburn, President of the Association of Teenage Diplomats, and Alicia Ward, coordinator of the Gary Simon Award, presented the award to School of the Arts student Katherine McKelvey. Katherine will spend the summer in Russia as a teenage diplomat. The award was established in 1999 in memory of Gary Simon, a teacher at Wilson Magnet High School.

Board Reports

- **Student Representative** - Dominique Simmonds presented a PowerPoint report on activities of the Student Leadership Congress this year. Several students also attended.
- **Finance** - Chairwoman Powell recommended approval of the monthly financial reports and resolutions 858, 859, 860 and 861. She also discussed the functionality survey done by the Finance Committee regarding its meetings. Motion to accept the monthly financial reports made by Commissioner Evans, second by Commissioner Brennan, carried 7-0 with Student Rep vote and Commissioner Elliott absent.
- **Quality Assurance** - Chairwoman Thompson said she would discuss the highlights of her report; anyone who wanted a full copy should call the Board Office. Quality Assurance has been studying the JROTC program for several months. The full Board of Education and Dr. Rivera have been provided with copies of all of the data and materials regarding this program. Commissioner Thompson made the motion to add JROTC to the agenda tonight because she thinks it's important to provide the community with an opportunity to share their experiences and express their sentiments, and for the full Board to discuss the topic and possibly take action.
- **Community and Intergovernmental Relations** - Chairman Evans recognized the students and staff participating in the "Green Schools" project. He also discussed Facilities Modernization Project, the enabling legislation for which is in Albany.
- **Board Governance** - Chairman Henley said his committee is recommending adoption of resolution 885 authorizing the broadcast of Board Business Meetings.
- **Policy** - Commissioner Brennan said the Local Wellness Policy has been forwarded as an information item. He then clarified it as a discussion item. Commissioner Powell said that because the proposed policy was not in front of the commissioners, they should postpone discussion until the June 29 special meeting, with a vote in July. Commissioners will discuss the Local Wellness Policy on June 29.

Commissioner Thompson noted that Student Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item should speak at this juncture. After some discussion, President Garcia and the other commissioner agreed. Four students then addressed the Board in support of JROTC.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Commissioner Thompson raised the JROTC topic as a discussion item. After a discussion among commissioners, Commissioner Powell made a motion to vote yes or no on JROTC after hearing the speakers. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Evans.

Roll call vote to vote on JROTC following discussion:

Commissioner Brennan	No
Commissioner Henley	Yes
Vice President Evans	Yes
Commissioner Powell	Yes
Commissioner Thompson	No
President Garcia	Yes

Adopted 4-2 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

Commissioners then heard 18 parents, community members and staff members state their opinions on the JROTC program. Each spoke for up to two minutes. With the four students who had spoken earlier, the position tally was 12 speakers against JROTC and 10 speakers for JROTC.

At 8:30 p.m., Commissioner Brennan made a motion to extend the meeting beyond 8:30, second by Commissioner Evans, carried 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

When the speakers had finished, Commissioners again discussed JROTC among themselves; all agreed it was important to have the discussion.

Commissioner Evans said it is essential that the Board listen to students and urged others to also. He has read the data and said it showed that JROTC does not have the vast majority of its participants entering the military after graduation.

Commissioner Thompson said that was one reason to discontinue the program and that the available data is inadequate. She urged the Board to consider the greater good when voting, similar to the Parent Preference/Managed Choice policy decision.

Commissioner Powell objected to the comparison with PP/MC.

Commissioner Brennan said he appreciated Commissioner Thompson's diligence in bringing the JROTC discussion to the table. He said that the more choices and decisions students have to make, the better those decisions will be. He wondered how tolerant we are of other people's choices. Commissioner Brennan said he wants to see greater oversight of the JROTC curriculum and accountability.

Commissioner Henley noted that he had spent many hours going through the JROTC data and had participated in the QA discussions. He also visited the program at the Edison campus.

Commissioner Thompson said she hopes there will be further study of the issues raised during the discussion. She noted that enlistees cannot walk away from the military, unlike other professions, and added that she appreciated the time her colleagues had devoted to the topic.

Commissioner Powell made a motion that the Board vote in support of or against the JROTC program for one year with the stipulation that the Superintendent review the curriculum, make sure that no recruiting or weapons training is taking place, and report back to the Board. Second by Commissioner Evans.

Roll call vote:

Commissioner Brennan:	Yes
Commissioner Henley:	Yes
Commissioner Evans:	Yes
Commissioner Powell:	Yes
Commissioner Thompson:	No
Commissioner Garcia:	Yes

Adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

President Garcia asked for a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss specific personnel matters. Motion by Commissioner Evans, second by Commissioner Henley. Carried at 9:20 p.m., 6-0, with Commissioner Elliott absent.

The Board reconvened in Public Session at 9:37 p.m.

Three additional speakers, on non-agenda items, addressed the Board.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Evans, second by Commissioner Powell, approved 6-0 at 9:51 p.m. with Commissioner Elliott absent.