

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Business Meeting

September 24, 2015

Attendance: President White and Vice President Elliott, Commissioners Adams, Campos, Cruz, Evans and Powell; Superintendent Bolgen Vargas; EPO Superintendent Shaun Nelms; Board Clerk Shanai Lee.

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

- I. The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by a young audience member from Henry Lomb School No. 20 selected by President White.
- II. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Motion to accept the minutes of the August 27th Business Meeting, September 15th Special Meeting and September 22nd Special Meeting was made by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Evans absent.
- III. **Recognition:** The Board recognized Principal Vicky Ramos and school staff of James Monroe High School for their efforts in developing and implementing a plan to raise student achievement. The staff have met with parents and community stakeholders to provide information about the recently enacted school receivership reform and the ways in which specific elements of the reform will result in improved student performance. In addition, Principal Ramos and her team accelerated preparations for the 2015-16 school year so that students at Monroe High School could begin on August 10th, 3 weeks earlier than usual. The outstanding and persistent efforts of Principal Ramos and her team led to an increase in the graduation rate for Monroe High School over the last year. The Board honored Principal Ramos and the faculty and staff of James Monroe High School for their exemplary performance by presenting the team with the “Yes We Can” award.
- IV. **Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item:** No speakers were present.
- V. **Speakers Not Addressing an Agenda Item:** Parent Iliana Justiniano spoke about the value of the programming at the Boys Academy of Martin Luther King, Jr. School No. 9.
- VI. **Superintendent’s Report:** Dr. Nelms provided the Board with an overview of the challenges related to daily student attendance at East HS under the direction of the University of Rochester as the Educational Partnership Organization and some of the initiatives that are being undertaken to combat truancy. Dr. Nelms noted that the school has implemented several programs, including Quest, Big Picture Learning, and Freedom School, to meet the needs of students. And lastly, Dr. Nelms spoke about the annual progress targets that must be met in order to make demonstrable improvement. He mentioned the school’s work with the Community Engagement Team and advised the Board that the quarterly progress reports would be made publicly available on the school’s website.

Superintendent's Report: Dr. Vargas provided the Board with an update of activities and occurrences related to the school receivership reform. He provided basic facts about the new reform noting that the NYSED dictates that “persistently struggling” schools must show improvement in one year or face being taken over by an outside receiver and “struggling” schools have two years to show improvement before outside receivership is applied. He spoke to the improvement targets that were released to districts in September 2015. Dr. Vargas mentioned that a minimum of 10 improvement targets, selected by the NYSED and Community Engagement Teams, must be applied to each school. These targets are designed to measure academic achievement, attendance, behavior and school practices. Dr. Vargas noted that the superintendent received must sent each school’s selected targets to the NYSED by October 2, 2015.

Commissioner Evans arrived at 8:05 p.m.

VII. Board Reports:

Audit Committee

Chair Mary Adams: No report.

Finance Committee

Chair Jose Cruz: The Finance Committee met on Tuesday, September 22nd to consider Resolution Nos. 2015-16: 215 through 238, and 248 through 251. Members of the Finance Committee recommend approval of the proposed amendments to the 2015-16 RCSD budget: a) Amend 2015-16 General Fund budget to \$685,064,882 to reflect a net decrease of \$200K, which includes reductions of \$100K in earnings from General Fund investments and of \$1.4M in Inter-Fund Transfers, and an increase in NYS Legislative Appropriation of \$1.3M (Resolution No. 2015-16: 248); b) Amend 2015-16 Special Aid Grant Fund budget to \$95,625,713 to reflect a net increase of \$3,998, including a reduction of \$627,959 in NYS grants, and an increase of \$622,597 in federal grant funding (Resolution No. 2015-16: 249); c) Retain the same level of funding for the 2015-16 School Food Service Fund of \$20,932,595 (Resolution No. 2015-16: 250) and d) Amend 2015-16 RCSD Budget to \$801,622,595 to reflect the above changes in the General Fund and Special Aid Grant Fund (Resolution No. 2015-16: 251). The following resolutions were reviewed by the Finance Committee, and advanced to the Board with recommendation: Resolutions 215 through 237 for Facilities; and Resolution 238 for Information Management & Technology. Motion to accept the budget amendments and monthly financial report made by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Evans. Motion carries 7-0.

As a follow-up from the discussion in last month’s meeting, Chris Hoch presented information about various strategies used by the District and its contractor, POMCO, Inc. for risk management in the Workers’ Compensation program. The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 15th at 5:30 p.m.

Excellence in Student Achievement Committee

Chair Malik Evans: The Excellence in Student Achievement Committee met on Tuesday, September 22nd, and reviewed the School Comprehensive Education Plans for School No. 9 and Monroe High School. Dr. Otuwa also provided information of the specific indicators required by the NYS Education

Department for evaluating “demonstrable improvement” at each of these schools over the 2015-16 school year. This evaluation will serve as the basis for determining whether each of these schools will be placed in external receivership in 2016-17.

The NYS Education Department requires that each elementary school and each high school have a minimum of 10 indicators to be used to evaluate performance over the next year. Schools with a combination of middle and high school grades (i.e. grades 7-12) are mandated to use a total of 14 indicators for performance evaluation.

The District is charged with identifying the additional metrics to be used in evaluating each school to meet the minimum number required. Dr. Otuwa reported that the Community Engagement Teams are currently determining the additional indicators to be used for each school, and the full set of evaluation metrics are due to be submitted to the NYS Education Department by October 2nd, or within 60 days of approval of the School Comprehensive Education Plan. The specific metrics required by the State for School No. 9 and for Monroe High School have been posted to BoardDocs under the Library tab, and Ms. Flanagan will continue to update this information as it becomes available.

An overview of the Arts Integration project was also presented in this month’s meeting, which described the rigorous design of the study, randomization of school selection for the project, various strategies for integrating the arts into curriculum content, and the metrics used to evaluate the impact on student engagement and achievement. The results thus far have been quite impressive in terms of increasing the percentage of students scoring at Level 3 and 4 on NYS Math and ELA assessments at the K-6 level, with some of the largest gains occurring in the early grades and in 6th grade. This outcome has been found consistently year-over-year, when comparing schools with arts integration with those that did not have this program.

The impact of arts integration was also greater for schools with higher levels of student poverty, lower-performing schools, and for ELL students and students with disabilities. The final analysis and report will be available after October 30th, and we look forward to learning the final results. A resolution is also presented for your consideration this evening for a proposed contract with the Center for Youth for the Alternatives to Suspension program (Resolution No. 2015-16: 247). Members of the ESA Committee recommend approval of this resolution by the Board.

The next ESA Committee meeting: is scheduled for Tuesday, October 13th, following the Community & Intergovernmental Relations Committee Meeting.

Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee (CIGR)

Chair Cynthia Elliott: The Community & Intergovernmental Relations Committee conducted a Meeting of the Whole on Tuesday, September 15th. Commissioner Adams requested that the original September agenda be suspended to focus on the primary agenda item, the MWBE update of the Rochester Schools Modernization Project. Brian Sanvidge, the Independent Compliance Officer of Baker Tilly International, presented on the Forensic Analysis of Landon & Rian’s Role as the Independent Compliance Officer of The Rochester Schools Modernization Program and provided an

update on workforce and business development goals. I have not shared the data and findings in this report because it is confidential information that has yet to be presented to the public. The findings will be released to the public in the near future.

The committee is planning to host a Receivership Forum in conjunction with the Legislative Breakfast in November. The Board is encouraged to continue thinking about what will be on the upcoming legislative agenda. The committee is also still working on developing a communications plan for the Board.

The next CIGR Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 15th, at 6:00 p.m.

Policy Committee

Chair Willa Powell: The Policy Committee met on September 17, 2015. The Administration submitted and delivered presentations on the following policy deliverables:

- *Policy 4326: Instruction of Limited English Proficient Students (LEP); Regulation* - Brendan Gallivan, Executive Director of ELL and LOTE, described the goals and vision of the department, the variety and scope of services, the type of students receiving students, strategies to increase and maximize teachers' and students' potential in the classroom, and the challenges the department faces including a decrease in state funding, recruitment and hiring of qualified teachers, and low participation in professional development. The committee will review the policy language changes and work on updating the policy next month. As an October agenda item, Commissioner Cruz wants to analyze how the Department of English Language Learners have been utilizing Dr. Donna Harris, an independent consultant, on the Latino initiative.
- *Policy 5405: Lead Safe Schools* - Suzanne Wheatcraft, Director of School Environmental Safety, described what the Facilities Department is required to do when dealing with lead paint including training the custodial and maintenance staff, requiring that renovation contractors have the proper training, having a representative on the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning, custodial and maintenance staff surveying the buildings and taking measures to prevent paint peeling, and educating parents on lead paint and their rights. There were no policy changes recommendations. Rochester's policy is still a national model.

Re-Adoption of a Full Policy Manual

The Policy Committee discussed the importance of re-adopting the full Rochester City School Board Policy Manual, reviewing the policies with deliverables, and making all the policies available online.

Policy 5153: Parent Preference/Managed Choice

The committee discussed looking at the data involved in this policy before continuing the discussion of community stakeholder.

Parent Liaisons and Home School Assistants – Roles and Functions

The Policy Committee will refer the review and analysis of Parent Liaisons and Home School Assistants' roles and functions to the Excellence in Student Achievement Committee.

Code of Conduct

This will be discussed at next month's meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Thursday, October 15, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

Board Governance Committee

Chair Melisza Campos: The Board Governance Committee met on September 17th to discuss Board development activities for the coming year. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Thursday, October 15th at 5:30 p.m.

VIII. Resolutions

2015-16: 177-187: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 7-0.

No resolutions submitted for Resolution Nos. 2015-16: 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, and 186.

2015-16: 188: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

2015-16: 189-191: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 7-0.

No resolutions submitted for Resolution No. 2015-16: 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, and 186, 192, 202, 204, 205, 206, 207,

Motion to separate Resolution No. 2015-16: 193 into Resolution No. 2015-16: 193a and Resolution No. 2015-16: 193b made by Vice President Elliott, seconded by Commissioner Campos. Motion carries 5-2 with Commissioner Cruz and Commissioner Evans dissenting.

2015-16: 193a: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 5-2 with Commissioner Adams and Commissioner Powell dissenting.

2015-16: 193b: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 7-0.

2015-16: 194: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

2015-16: 195-196: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 7-0.

2015-16: 197: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

2015-16: 198-199: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 7-0.

Motion to separate Resolution No. 2015-16: 200 into Resolution No. 2015-16: 200a and Resolution No. 2015-16: 200b made by Vice President Elliott, seconded by Commissioner Campos. Motion carries 7-0.

2015-16: 200a: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 7-0.

Motion to postpone the consideration of Resolution No. 2015-16: 200b made by Vice President Elliott, seconded by Commissioner Powell. Motion carries 7-0.

2015-16: 201-209: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 7-0.

2015-16: 210-214: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

2015-16: 215-237: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 7-0.

2015-16: 238: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 7-0.

2015-16: 239: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner Adams dissenting.

2015-16: 240: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 7-0.

2015-16: 241-244: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

2015-16: 245: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 7-0.

2015-16: 246: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

2015-16: 247-251: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 7-0.

2015-16: 252-253: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 7-0.

Motion to amend Resolution No. 2015-16: 254 to remove the following language: “and be it further resolved, that the Board authorizes the reconfiguration of The Leadership Academy for Young Men from Grades 9-12, to Grades 7-12, and the submission of appropriate documents required by the State Education Department with respect to the reconfiguration” made by Commissioner Evans, seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Motion carries 6-1 with Commissioner Adams dissenting.

Motion to postpone the consideration of Resolution No. 2015-16: 254 made Vice President Elliott, seconded by Commissioner Adams. Motion fails 3-4 with President White, Commissioner Campos, Commissioner Cruz, and Commissioner Evans dissenting.

2015-16: 254: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 4-3 with Vice President Elliott, Commissioner Adams, and Commissioner Powell dissenting.

IX. Unfinished Business: None.

X. New Business: None.

Motion to enter into executive session to discuss matters related to the employment of specific individuals made by Vice President Elliott at 9:57 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Powell. Motion carries 7-0.

Motion to enter into open session made by Commissioner Powell at 10:20 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Motion carries 7-0.

Motion to enter into executive session to discuss matters related to the employment of specific individuals made by Commissioner Cruz at 10:21 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Motion carries 7-0.

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Evans, seconded by Commissioner Powell at 10:35 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Motion carries 7.0.