

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Business Meeting

February 25, 2016

Attendance: President White, Commissioners Cruz, Evans, Hallmark and Powell; Interim Superintendent Linda Cimusz; EPO Superintendent Shaun Nelms; Board Clerk Shanai Lee.

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

- I. The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was led by a young audience member.
- II. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Motion to accept the minutes of the January 28th Business Meeting, February 9th Special Meeting, and February 23rd Special Meeting made by Commissioner Cruz, seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 4-0 with Vice President Elliott, Commissioner Adams, and Commissioner Powell absent.
- III. **Recognition:** No recognitions.
- IV. **Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item:** No speakers were present.

Commissioner Powell arrived at 6:40 p.m.

- V. **Speakers Not Addressing an Agenda Item:** Parents Victoria Smith and Jennifer LaPointe spoke about the learning environment at Wilson Foundation Academy, particularly as it relates to younger and older children sharing a building. Parent Jack Spula spoke against a proposed military academy for District students. Parent Wade Burns spoke about the benefits of the Boys Academy program at School No. 9 and noted the District's Code of Conduct should mirror the program. Community member Patrick Pulvino spoke about various aspects of the Muslim religion. Community members Doug Noble and Luis Montemaggi spoke against a proposed military academy for District students. Community members Cuevas Walker spoke about the importance of creating a positive learning environment. Staff members Rachel Dobbs, Kim Levitt, Genine Glavich-Hawkins, and Emily Kilkenny spoke about the lack of classroom space at School No. 4 noting that the building is not suitable for grades kindergarten through 8 programming. Staff members Chantal Lischer and Tammie Lezeska spoke about the logistical issues of sharing space at the James Madison campus which currently houses the Rochester Early College International High School and Wilson Foundation Academy. Parent Elvina Manning spoke about the Code of Conduct and the need for student discipline policies that address the academic and social-emotional needs of students.
- VI. **Superintendent's Report (East High School EPO):** EPO Superintendent Shaun Nelms introduced Lia Tinkelman Festenstein, Director of Special Programs to discuss the programming available to students with disabilities and those receiving specialized services as well as overage and under-credited students

requiring additional supports. Ms. Festenstein provided an overview of the following targeted programs to address the needs of students: Big Picture, Freedom School, East Evening program, ENL services, and bilingual programming. In concluding the presentation, she noted that the counselors and social workers of the school have worked to identify post high school opportunities and gaps in specialized services and social emotional supports for all students.

Superintendent's Report: Interim Superintendent Cimusz provided the Board with a monthly update on the District's programming and planning. She noted that 1,200 parents and community members attended the Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten Registration Fair and more than 170 new students registered for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. Ms. Cimusz provided an overview of the 2016-2017 school calendar and noted that the calendar was developed in collaboration with other Monroe County school districts and the District's bargaining units. In speaking about the 2016 grade 3 through 8 New York state assessments, she noted that this year the tests are expected to have fewer questions and no time restrictions. Ms. Cimusz also mentioned that the results of the assessments will not be used as a part of teacher and principal evaluations. Ms. Cimusz concluded the presentation by stating that the Board will be expected to approve the revised Phase 2 Master Plan for the District's facilities modernization plan at the March 2016 Business Meeting.

VII. Board Reports:

Audit Committee

Chair Mary Adams: No report submitted.

Finance Committee

Chair Jose Cruz: The Finance Committee met on February 18th to consider Resolution Nos. 2015-16: 558 through 563. Members of the Finance Committee recommend approval of the January 2016 Financial Report. A motion to accept the report was made by Commissioner Cruz, and seconded by Commissioner Evans. Motion carries 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent.

The following budget amendments were reviewed by the Finance Committee, and are advanced to the Board with recommendation: amendment to the 2015-16 General Fund Budget to \$686,531,302 to reflect a reduction of \$253,424 – Resolution No. 2015-16: 558, amendment to the 2015-16 Special Aid Grant Fund Budget to \$116,187,457 due to a net increase of \$4,672,850 – Resolution No. 2015-16: 559, the 2015-16 School Food Services Budget at \$20,932,000 – Resolution No. 2015-16: 560, amendment to the overall 2015-16 RCSD Budget to \$832,650,759 to reflect the above changes in the General Fund and Special Aid Grant Fund Budgets – Resolution No. 2015-16: 561. The following resolutions were also reviewed by the Finance Committee, and are advanced to the Board with recommendation: Resolutions 562 and 563 for Facilities.

The members of the Finance Committee also received a presentation regarding the development of a Smart Phone application that would enable parents to readily access ParentConnect, District news and calendars, and important notifications.

Since the families in our District may not have computers, this Smart Phone application would make essential information much more readily available and thereby promote parent engagement. The Parent

Advisory Council, parent groups, and teachers have reviewed plans for this Smart Phone application consider it a significant improvement over ParentConnect. The Smart Phone application will be integrated with the District's Student Management System and Power Teacher Gradebook, so that the application will automatically be updated with updates to these systems. Two concerns were expressed by Committee members regarding the proposed Smart Phone application: ensuring the timely update of the other systems (particularly Power Teacher Gradebook) to ensure that parents are receiving the most recent information about their child, and the ongoing costs for annual maintenance for the Smart Phone application to ensure that this will be sustainable in the long term.

Committee members unanimously approved advancing this proposal to the full Board in this evening's meeting (Resolution No. 2015-16: 569).

The next scheduled Finance Committee Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 17th at 5:30 p.m.

Excellence in Student Achievement Committee

Chair Malik Evans: The Excellence in Student Achievement Committee met on Thursday, January 21st, with a very full agenda. Presentations were given regarding: a cost/benefit analysis for implementing Arts Integration in all RCSD elementary schools, a comprehensive overview of the Teaching & Learning Division, and the ways in which the many functions of this division supports students; a plan for providing Social and Emotional Supports and Learning throughout the District; the job descriptions, roles and responsibilities of Parent Liaisons and Home School Assistants and the possibility of combining these two position titles into one unified position for consistency; and a preview of a summer learning video to be released by the District.

In addition, Committee members reviewed three resolutions that are presented for your consideration in this evening's meeting:

- Resolution No. 2015-16: 505 – agreement with The Big Picture Company to provide professional development on structures, practices, and curriculum that are proven to be effective in engaging students.
- Resolution No. 2015-16: 507 – to amend the contract with the Center for Youth to establish a HelpZone and add a Youth Advocate at Edison High School.
- Resolution No. 2015-16: 509 – to establish three Youth Advocates through the Hillside
- Work Scholarship Connection program.

The members of the Excellence in Student Achievement Committee unanimously approved all three of these resolutions, and advance them to the Board with recommendation in this evening's meeting.

The next committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 18th, following the Finance Committee Meeting.

Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee (CIGR)

Chair Cynthia Elliott: The Excellence in Student Achievement Committee met on Thursday, February 18th, and received presentations regarding:

- The final report and findings from the Arts Integration Project: the most rigorous research design was used in this study, with randomized treatment and control schools and objective, measurable outcome data. An independent evaluator found substantial and statistically significant gains in student performance for the schools participating in arts integration, compared to those that did not. One of the most important findings was that the greatest gains were made by students in low-performing schools, indicating the potential for arts integration to overcome performance issues in these schools. Significant gains were also made by ELL students and students with disabilities. Implementing arts integration district-wide would be an investment in student engagement and achievement, rather than remediating losses that have already occurred.
- Summer Learning: an overview of the expansion of summer programs over the last few years was presented, with data regarding the outcomes for students who attended summer programs versus those who did not.
 - In Math, 59% of students participating in summer programs experienced gains or no learning loss, compared to 48% of students who did not attend these programs.
 - In Reading, 64% of students attending summer programs had gains or no learning loss, compared to 55% of students who did not attend these programs.
 - Average daily attendance among students participating in summer programs was about 2% higher during the school year than for those who did not attend these programs. In addition, summer programming improvements were discussed: increased participation by ELL students and students with disabilities, greater coordination in schedules among programs to maximize transportation and food service efficiency, and a formal application process to enable teachers to have information about participating students in advance for planning.
- Projected Graduation Rates: the projections reported in the Committee meeting were based on a transcript audit conducted by Dr. Otuwa and her team in mid-September for the 2012 cohort, which will be graduating in June.
- Based on this review, approximately 45% of students are considered “on track” to graduate in June at this point, with another 5-6% in August. “On track” was determined by having at least 6 credits and passing the Regents exams.
- Committee members emphasized the need to make significant improvements in graduation rates, and to determine the factors that will have the most positive impact in raising the number of graduates in the District.
- Online Credit Recovery Courses: this is the first year that online credit recovery has been implemented systemically in all RCSD high schools. Online credit recovery now includes full-year courses that students are able to complete in one semester. For the 2015-16 school year to date, students have collectively earned a total of 109 credits through online credit recovery. By June, it is projected that another 150 credits will be earned by students through online credit recovery.

In addition, Committee members reviewed Resolution No. 2015-16: 565, which is presented for your consideration in this evening’s meeting.

- Resolution No. 2015-16: 565 – proposed agreement to contract with an independent evaluator to examine the 2015-16 performance of RCSD “persistently struggling” schools. This is required under NYS Education law regarding receivership, and will be funded through the NYS grant for “persistently struggling” schools.

The Committee decided to simply advance this resolution to the Board for consideration, since information was not yet available at the time of the Committee meeting regarding the specific terms of the proposed contract.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Thursday, March 17th following the Finance Committee meeting.

Policy Committee

Chair Willa Powell: The Policy Committee met on Tuesday, February 23, 2016. The Committee received a presentation by Executive Director of PE/Athletics/Health Carlos Cotto on the Board’s recognition of Booster Clubs. The Committee primarily discussed the accountability process of Booster Clubs. Mr. Cotto recommended an approval process from the governing body, submission of quarterly reports, and the assignment of a district designee for monitoring purposes. The Committee agreed to integrate a dollar threshold and/or list of standard items into the policy. General Counsel Charles Johnson will work with Mr. Cotto to make the following adjustments: removing the line “The Board of Education will establish...” found in the original resolution and create a new draft policy using the sample policies. The new draft policy will return to the Policy Committee.

District Coordinator of Student Health Services Erin Graupman returned to the Policy Committee to discuss the Students with Serious and/or Life Threatening Medical Condition draft policy. The Committee advances this draft policy to the full Board as an Information Item. There were cosmetic and format changes/additions requested including: lettered bullets, policy number, state mandates referenced at the bottom, and a cross reference between Policy 5405: Wellness Policy.

The Chief of Human Capital Initiatives Harry Kennedy provided a detailed summary of staff suspensions, new hires, and terminations. He also presented his recruitment strategy to diversify the District’s workforce. As a follow up, Mr. Kennedy will meet with Mr. Johnson to review existing Policy 9110 Equal Employment Opportunity and give the Committee recommendations, if needed.

During the March Policy Committee Meeting, we will revisit the draft Booster Club Policy, the proposed Board By-Laws, and the draft Booster Club policy

The next meeting of the Committee is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 18th at 5:30 p.m.

Board Governance Committee

Chair Elizabeth Hallmark: The Governance Committee met on Tuesday, February 9, 2016 where we discussed new member orientation and the role of Board school liaisons.

In discussing the process for on-boarding new commissioners, the Committee reviewed a form titled “What Every Board Member Needs to Know.” The form is intended to serve as a guidebook for newly elected Board members to become acquainted with the school district and the roles and responsibilities of school board stewardship. The Board’s staff is working to revise the form to include the following information:

- The current organizational chart,
- A listing of District alternative education programs,
- A listing of Board school liaison assignments, and an
- Overview of Board staff responsibilities.

In discussing Board school liaison assignments and the role of liaisons, it was noted that the liaison assignment is a beneficial construct because it allows Board members to advocate on behalf of parents and school programs. I suggest that the full Board continue this discussion as we work to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the governance structure.

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, April 19th at 5:30 p.m.

VIII. Resolutions

2015-16: 517-529: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent.

Resolutions were not submitted for Resolution No. 2015-16: 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 525, 526, 527, and 530

2015-16: 531-552: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent.

2015-16: 553-557: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent.

2015-16: 558-561: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent.

2015-16: 562-563: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent.

2015-16: 564-574: Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent.

IX. Unfinished Business: None.

X. New Business: Commissioner Powell introduced the Students with Serious and/or Life Threatening Medical Conditions Policy as an Information Item to be reviewed by the Board and discussed at the March 2016 Business Meeting.

Motion to enter into executive session to discuss matters related to the employment of specific individuals made by Commissioner Hallmark at 8:06 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Motion carries 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent..

Motion to enter into open session made by Commissioner Powell at 8:35 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Motion carries 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent..

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Evans, seconded by Commissioner Powell at 8:43 p.m. Motion carries 5-0 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams absent.