

Rochester Board of Education
Business Meeting April 19, 2007
6 p.m.

Minutes

Attendance: President Garcia, Commissioners Thompson, Powell, and Brennan. Commissioners Evans and White arrived 6:35 p.m. Commissioner Elliott absent.

President Garcia convened the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

- I) Commissioner Powell led the Pledge of Allegiance and Act of Reverance.
- II) Motion to accept minutes of March 15, 2007 Business Meeting by Commissioner Thompson. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 4-0 with Commissioners Evans, Elliott and White absent.
- III) Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item: Board of Education Non-Teaching Employees (BENTE) President Daniel DiClemente praised the Board's selection of Dr. William Cala (Resolution 2006-07: 697) as Interim Superintendent and welcomed him to the District. Mr. DiClemente also discussed the BENTE contract approved by the Board at the March 15 Business Meeting.

The Board of Education presented Dr. Rivera with a plaque recognizing his 30 years of dedication to the students, staff and community of the Rochester City School District.

- IV) Superintendent's Report: For his last official meeting as Superintendent of the Rochester City School District, Dr. Manuel Rivera thanked the Board, his staff, and all district partners for their efforts on behalf of children. He announced Michele Hancock's recent award for her exceptional work with children and the School 25 interdisciplinary project displayed on the second floor of Central Office. He also noted the School of The Arts awards at the Heritage Music Festival. The Parent Partnership Council will be conducting two community meetings the week of April 23. Commissioner Powell asked if economic indicators for families are being collected as part of the kindergarten registration process. Dr. Rivera called on Chief of Operations C. Michael Robinson, who affirmed that the data is being collected.
- V) Board Standing Committee Reports

Student Representative Maurice Evans spoke of the Student Leadership Congress's appreciation for Dr. Rivera's work in the District. The SLC completed production of its Public Service Announcements in March.

Policy: Chair Thomas Brennan said the next Policy Committee meeting is April 25. He recognized Special Assistant to the Board of Education Shanai Lee for her high quality service to the Board. Ms. Lee is leaving Board staff May 14. Commissioner Brennan also complimented Dr. Rivera and said the vast majority of the community understands that children in Rochester will have better lives because of Dr. Rivera.

Community and Intergovernmental Relations: Chair Malik Evans reported that the enabling legislation for the Facilities Modernization Program has been submitted to Assemblyman David Gantt and Senator

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Joseph Robach in anticipation that it will be introduced and voted on during this session of the New York State Legislature.

Finance: Chair Willa Powell said the committee met April 17 to review the monthly financial reports and recommends all of the reviewed resolutions for approval. Commissioner Powell pointed out that some of the facilities resolutions are a result of the District working cooperatively with the City of Rochester. The committee also recommends approval of the Third Quarter Student Activity Fund Report. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 24 at 6:30 pm. This meeting will be a Finance Committee of the Whole meeting to review the third (final) section of the Budget Book. The next regularly scheduled meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 8th.

- o Motion to accept the monthly financial reports by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.
- o Motion to accept the Student Activity Fund Report by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

Quality Assurance: Chair Shirley Thompson said Quality Assurance met Monday, April 16 to discuss the Diversity Initiative/Culture Change/Human Resources report, the African and African American Studies Department, New York State's new accountability reporting system, and the challenges faced by students with alternative lifestyles. New York State is retroactively instituting new accountability measures regarding the calculation of graduation rates. These new measures are expected to lower the RCSD graduation rate by more than a dozen percentage points. It does this by counting all students who are with the District for five months -- regardless of why they leave -- as RCSD students until they spend at least five months in another district. QA will work with Community and Intergovernmental Relations to see whether these new regulations can be addressed in Albany. The African and African American Studies Department, following Board approval of the 2007-08 budget, expects to have a director in place by the end of May. QA members continue to have questions regarding the hiring of African Americans and others of color. QA also wants to know how many candidates of color apply and are not hired compared to how many Caucasians apply and are hired. QA's next meeting is May 7 at 6 p.m.

Audit: Chair Van White said Audit met on April 4 to discuss the RTA Grievance Process, Whistleblower Policy, Financial Expert appointment to the Committee, a proposed meeting schedule, and staffing for the Claims Auditor. The Committee agreed that temporary personnel should be added to the Claims Auditor's staff to support the PeopleSoft 8.9 Upgrade Project. The Committee recommends obtaining the advice of outside counsel on the interpretation of the RTA contract language related to the grievance procedure.

- o Motion to obtain advice of outside counsel re: RTA contract language/grievance procedure by Commissioner Thompson. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Powell dissenting and Commissioner Elliott absent.

VI) Consideration of Resolutions

Commissioner Powell asked that Resolutions 2006-07: 696 and 697 be voted on separately.

2006-07: 627-649. Motion by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent, except for 2006-07: 637, adopted 5-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent and President Garcia abstaining because of a personal relationship.

2006-07: 650-669. Motion by Commissioner Brennan. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

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2006-07: 670-676. Motion by Commissioner Thompson. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2006-07: 677-682. Motion by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Brennan. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2006-07: 683-695. Motion by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2006-07: 696. Motion by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2006-07: 697. Motion by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

VII) No unfinished business.

VIII) New Business: Commissioner White proposed several ideas to increase the 2007 graduation rate. Of 1,564 potential graduates, 494 are at risk of not crossing the stage in June. He proposed that Central Office staff be allowed to help students two hours per week. Sixty-six days left. Also get the community involved and reassign National Board Certified teachers to troubled schools. Provide them with a financial incentive if necessary. Also, restore the positions relating to Chief of Standards and Accountability and the Managing Director of Student Data to provide real-time assessment of where students are, academically. Dr. Rivera said his chiefs have prepared a 10-point plan to address the graduation rate. Commissioner Evans thanked Commissioner White for coming up with his plan.

IX) Speakers on Other Than Agenda Items

The Rev. George Nicholas: There are low expectations and the acceptance of academic mediocrity. All children can excel. Children are the clients and parents are the shareholders. It is time for radical education reform.

The Rev. Willie Harvey: The schools and the community must work together for children.

Minister Clifford Florence: Parents should have been notified of the DICA (District in Corrective Action) status. The community was led to believe the children are improving. There is a lack of parental notification of fighting and students feel unsafe. The District rewards failure. Parents feel marginalized. The District needs to strengthen school based planning on side of parents. The challenge to the new leadership is to stop the down-spiraling and raise expectations for all children.

X) Adjournment: Motion by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent at 7:14 p.m.