

# Rochester Board of Education

## June 28, 2007 Business Meeting

### Minutes

Attendance: President Garcia, Vice President Evans, Commissioners Brennan (arrived 6:35 p.m.), Elliott, Powell (arrived 6:40 p.m.), Thompson and White.

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

- I) Commissioner White led the Pledge of Allegiance and Act of Reverence. President Garcia noted the passing of former staff member Mrs. Joyce McKay and the recent Fairport tragedy.
- II) Motion to approve Minutes of May 24, 2007 by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner White. Commissioner Elliott asked that it be noted that Resolutions 2006-07: 760 and 762 did not involve a minority contractor. Commissioner Thompson said her Quality Assurance Committee report should have noted that the Board is capable of changing the drop-out age from 16 to 17, through written policy, without special legislation. Approved as amended 5-0 with Commissioners Brennan and Powell not in attendance.
- III) Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item: None.
- IV) Superintendent's Report: Dr. William Cala and the Board recognized two students for perfect attendance from Grades Kindergarten - Twelve; the Student Leadership Congress presented its end-of-year report using a multi-media format. Dr. Cala commented on the graduation ceremonies he attended and the pride of the graduates and their families. He also discussed the "City Hall on the Road" show he attended that was targeted to young people in the City. Commissioner Elliott commented that the District must improve in order to help keep the young professionals in the City; the District needs to be as competitive as suburban districts.
- V) Standing Committee Reports: All commissioners commented on their enjoyment and pride at attending graduation and moving-up ceremonies. The Native American Resource Center was scheduled to present to the Board at this time but encountered technical difficulties.

#### **Policy Committee**

Commissioner Brennan, Chair, said Policy will meet in July to discuss the lead safe schools policy and an amendment to Policy 4350, Multicultural/Global Education, among other items.

#### **Board Governance**

Commissioner Elliott, Chair, said Board Governance met May 30, June 19 and June 26 to discuss several continuing topics. The committee forwarded a recommendation to the Policy Committee that the Board Bylaws be amended to add a Personnel Committee to the list of standing committees. Governance has begun looking at the way all the committees function; a better model may be configuring the committees around the resolutions sent to the Board: Human Resources, Facilities, Procurement and Supply, and Information Technology. The meeting June 19 regarding the role of the Board President was informative for all concerned. Board Governance also continues to discuss its role in the supervision/evaluation of Board staff and at its July meeting will begin the process of establishing the Board's goals for the coming year.

## **Community and Intergovernmental Relations**

Commissioner Malik Evans, Chair, said Community and Intergovernmental Relations met to hear a presentation regarding a successful pre-apprenticeship program in the Newburgh City School District. After hearing the presentation, which included input from local labor leaders, it was the consensus of CIR that a program such as this could benefit students and the community. A movement to establish this type of program at the Edison schools has been in the works for years; CIR hopes to get it back on track and Commissioner Evans will work with the Superintendent to identify next steps. The enabling legislation for the Facilities Modernization Program was not approved during the recent legislative session. It is anticipated that the state legislature will convene in July and CIR remains optimistic that the legislation will be approved, signed by the governor, and this critical initiative can move forward.

## **Finance**

Chair Willa Powell said Finance Committee met June 12 to review the monthly financial reports and consider resolutions 2006-07: 807 through 851. After fully discussing the reports and the resolutions, the committee recommends adoption by the full Board of the May financial reports and the following resolutions:

2006-07: 807-825 Educational Facilities

2006-07: 826-837 Procurement and Supply

2006-07: 838-851 Information Technology and Other

The next Finance Committee meeting is July 12. Commissioner Powell moved that the May financial reports be approved. Second by Commissioner Brennan. Adopted 7-0.

## **Quality Assurance**

Commissioner Thompson, Chair, complimented Commissioner White for his diligence in spurring the graduation triage efforts. Quality Assurance met June 11 and 27. On June 11 it heard a presentation about the Major Achievement Program in place for grades 4-6 at seven schools. This program served 440 students in 2006-07. Students are selected for the program based on their standardized test scores and other criteria. QA was discussing the program in order to determine whether the qualities of this program could be distributed throughout the district to benefit all students. There was a lengthy discussion with several follow-up questions, and QA anticipates discussing it further. QA also heard an update on the African and African American Studies Department June 11. This initiative is moving forward; the director position is being advertised locally and nationally. Chief of Diversity Michelle Hancock envisions an advisory panel of local experts to guide the department. The department will infuse African and African American culture into the existing curriculum; it will not be an add-on or in conflict with current NYS assessment preparation. QA is pleased with the way this initiative is developing, but believes that the Board should still have a policy in place establishing the initiative. The recommendation is that Policy Committee consider amending Policy 4350, Multicultural/Global Education, to reflect the addition of the African and African American perspective. QA has forwarded this proposal to Policy for a recommendation to the full Board and anticipates that this recommendation will be on the Board's July agenda.

## **Audit**

Commissioner White, Chair, said Audit Committee met June 18. Members discussed the 2007-08 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), the 237 outstanding RTA grievances, implementation of the whistle-blower hotline, the committee meeting schedule, audit report format, and audit plan timing. Deloitte and Touche has begun work on the CAFR. Reports are due to the City of Rochester September 14 (estimated date), and the CAFR must be issued by December 31, 2007. Audit has asked administration to report on the status of the 237 outstanding RTA grievances and understand they are working with RTA representatives. Regarding the whistle-blower hotline to be established in accordance with Board Policy 9645 approved in October 2005, Audit is still monitoring the working out of the logistics of who handles the calls and how. Audit is expected to meet at least four times a year. The

committee has decided to meet monthly in order to support the audit function. Audit reports will be provided in summary form.

VI) Consideration of Resolutions

2006-07: 776-806. Motion by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Powell. Commissioner Elliott asked why art and music teachers are being paid more than elementary and secondary academic teachers. Response to be provided in writing. Resolutions adopted 7-0 except for 778, 779, 793, 796, 798, and 800, which were adopted 6-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting; and 794, which was adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting and President Garcia abstaining.

2006-07: 807-825. Motion by Commissioner Thompson. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 7-0.

2006-07: 826-837: Motion by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 7-0. Commissioner White suggested that MBWE contractors/suppliers be identified on resolutions.

2006-07: 838-848: Motion by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 7-0.

2006-07: 849-857: Motion by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner White. Adopted 7-0 except for 851, which was adopted 6-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting.

VII) Unfinished Business: None

VIII) New Business: None

IX) Speakers on Other Than Agenda Items: Ten speakers, including students, parents and staff members, spoke on behalf of the "A Horse's Friend" program and asked that it be restored to the budget. Parent Deborah Jones discussed the importance of elementary school education; students don't learn to read in High School. Parent Amy Gravitz spoke of the loss of special education support at School 1 and urged that the special education component of Great Start be restored. She said the information was not communicated and parents don't know about the loss of services. Community member Kerry Coleman discussed the misconduct of individuals and how people are ostracized. He said there are leaders who do not have integrity and character; it is up to the adults to get along. People should be held accountable. Staff member Clianda Florence discussed a clinical psychologist who had been fired. Staff member Lori Thomas said the miseducation of children is an evil that must be eliminated from the system. Money is going into the wrong place, and children are not test scores.

X) Adjournment. Motion to adjourn to executive session by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Thompson. Adopted 7-0 at 8:15 p.m. Motion to adjourn executive session and regular meeting by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 at 9:40 p.m. Commissioner Thompson excused at 9:15 p.m.