

Rochester Board of Education
Minutes
July 19, 2007

6:30 p.m.

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

President Garcia convened the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

- I) Commissioner Powell led the Act of Reverence and Pledge of Allegiance.
- II) Motion to approve minutes of June 28, 2007 by Commissioner White. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 4-0.
- III) Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item: Dr. Bridgette Wiefeling, CEO of the Anthony Jordan Health Center, said the Center hopes to be able to provide more chronic medical and dental care for students; better access to medical care is expected to decrease absences and improve asthma and obesity outcomes.
- IV) Dr. Cala honored a student for achieving 13 years of perfect attendance; the student's parents also received a standing ovation. Dr. Cala discussed an anti-racism meeting he attended with the Anti-Racism Movement (ARM); also approval of the Facilities Modernization Initiative and garnering additional community input into it. He introduced administrator candidates expected to be approved by the Board who attended the meeting: Idonia Owens, Bryant Cromartie, Carleen Meers, Vicma Ramos, and Deasure Matthew.
- V) Board Standing Committee reports

Policy: Thomas Brennan, Chair, thanked Commissioners White and Powell, and Derrick Hazle of the Lead Coalition, for their perseverance. The Lead Safe Schools policy is near completion. The Policy Committee met on Tuesday, July 17 and agreed to forward four policies to the Board of Education: Cell Phone, Code of Ethics, Amendment to 4350 for the African and African American Studies Department, and annual approval of the Code of Conduct. The items will be discussed under New Business. Policy's next meeting is Wednesday, August 8 at 6 p.m.

Community and Intergovernmental Relations: Malik Evans, Chair, said CIGR will follow-up on the apprenticeship issue at its August meeting.

Finance: Willa Powell, Chair, called Resolution 60 a hallmark agreement with the City of Rochester regarding five important facilities issues. The Finance Committee recommends approval of Resolutions 2007-08: 39-55 and 60-63. The next meeting is August 9 at 5:30 p.m.

Quality Assurance: Shirley Thompson, Chair, noted that Quality Assurance had to cancel its July meeting. The committee will meet August 13 and the agenda includes a review of suspension and attendance data, and an update on the implementation of the African and African American Studies Department.

Audit: Van Henri White, Chair, reported that the Audit Committee met July 18 to discuss the Open Meetings Law, the Whistleblower process, the claims audit function and outstanding Deloitte bills. Commissioner White moved that the Board agree to pay \$10,197 on the Deloitte invoice for District related inefficiencies, \$13,860 on the invoice for the fixed asset restatement work, and write a letter from the Board to Deloitte clearly stating that any bills submitted to the District must fully comply with contractual terms. Commissioner Evans seconded the motion, which was adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent. President Garcia directed Clerk to prepare a letter for his signature to Deloitte.

VI) Consideration of Resolutions. Commissioner Evans thanked Finance staff for providing a chart within the resolution identifying MWBE and city-located firms. Commissioner Thompson asked whether it was possible to further break chart down to show whether firms are minority or women-owned, and CFO James Coney said yes.

2007-08: 1-38. Motion to adopt by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Thompson. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent except for 17, which was adopted 4-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent and President Garcia and Commissioner Evans abstaining because of family relationships.

2007-08: 39-40. Motion to adopt by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2007-08: 41-42: Motion to adopt by Commissioner Thompson. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2007-08: 43-44: Motion to adopt by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2007-08: 45-59: Motion to adopt by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

President Garcia separated resolutions 2007-08: 60-63 for individual consideration.

2007-08: 60: Motion to adopt by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2007-08: 61: Motion to adopt by Commissioner Thompson. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2007-08: 62: Motion to adopt by Commissioner Evans. Second by Commissioner Thompson. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2007-08: 63: Motion to adopt by Commissioner Thompson. Second by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

VII) Unfinished Business: None

VII) New Business:

Commissioner Brennan introduced the Cell Phone, Code of Ethics, Policy 4350 amendment, and annual approval of the Code of Conduct.

Cell Phone: Commissioner Thompson posed several questions on the policy. Administrators responded that there is a fixed price contract with Verizon for service for 168 district cell phones and pdas. Staff monitors and charges back usage for picture, ringtone, etc. downloads that are “out of bounds” for district business, but the fixed price contract obviates the need to chargeback users \$1 here or there for personal use. It would cost more money to monitor personal phone calls. The new policy addresses monitoring and distribution, by title. Cell phones are provided by ASAR to administrators who must be available 24/7; the District pays for the contracts. CIO Ford Greene said he would provide the Board with the cost of the Verizon contract. A poll of Commissioners by President Garcia showed the majority do not want to be provided with District cellphones. All outstanding issues in the policy will be addressed at the next Policy Committee meeting and the Board is expected to vote on adoption at its August 16 Business Meeting.

Code of Ethics: No questions/comments.

Amendment to 4350, Multicultural Education. The amendment was referred to Policy from Quality Assurance. Commissioner Thompson explained that the proposal creates a Department of African and African American Studies because the topics are separate experiences and will provide students with a greater appreciation of who they are. Commissioner White said it is just as important for students to learn about Asian, Carribbean, etc. cultures as it is European and that all students will benefit from exposure to African history and culture. Commissioner Thompson said the department would not be exclusively curriculum driven and would encompass staff development initiatives. Commissioner Powell asked that the cross referencing and adoption date information be provided when the Board votes on the amendment in August.

Code of Conduct: Discussion centered around when the Code is updated and approved. Head Counsel Michael Looby said it does not have to be done in July and August. Commissioner Powell said Policy has been informed that there are parents with comments and Policy would like to hear them before approval. Policy will conduct a public hearing seeking input, and the Board is expected to vote on the update in August, but that will not preclude the Board from amending the Code in the future. Additionally, Policy is considering moving the public hearing to May or June when parents are more engaged in the school year.

IX) Speakers on other than Agenda items: Parent Valarie Johnson said parental input should be sought regarding the Code of Conduct, as suspensions are often levied based on an interpretation of it. She also discussed the lack of constituency representation on the Parent Partnership Council and the District Advisory Council to Title I. Community member Glenn Williams said parent involvement is crucial and that parent input is given little or no weight. As an example he cited the principal appointment at Wilson. He asked that Commissioner Evans, as Chair of Community and Intergovernmental Relations, address this issue. Mr. Williams said parents should select their representatives, just as teachers and administrators do. Community member Carrie Remis addressed educational justice and called for school accountability and sustainable reform. She cited a concerted district effort to deny and conceal various information items. Dr. Cala, addressing the speakers, said administration is aware of the issues and is

actively working on them. President Garcia asked Ms. Remis to provide the Clerk with a copy of her statement. Commissioner Powell said it pained her to hear the parent experiences described by the speakers because it meant that nothing has changed since she was addressing the same issues as a parent several years ago. She said she would like to be involved in any investigation and documentation of the issues and requested the status of PTA or PTO organizations in buildings; it is the principal's responsibility to recruit and nurture these organizations. Commissioner Thompson said Quality Assurance had requested the composition of School Based Planning teams but the parent outreach effort must move beyond PTAs and PTOs; someone in administration should be designated to lead the effort.

- X) Motion to adjourn by Commissioner White. Second by Commissioner Thompson. Adopted 5-0 with Commissioners Elliott and Evans (departed 7:30 p.m.) absent.