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**Rochester Board of Education
March 27, 2008
6:30 p.m., Franklin High School
Minutes**

The Board conducted its annual Women's History Observance prior to the Business Meeting.

Attendance: President Evans, Vice President White, Commissioners Brennan, Campos, Powell and Williams, Superintendent Brizard, Student Representative Rosetta Washington, Board Clerk L. Dunsmoor. Commissioner Elliott out of town.

President Evans convened the Business Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

I) Commissioner Powell led the Act of Reverence and Pledge to the Flag.

President Evans moved Section VI of the Agenda, Consideration of Resolutions, ahead of Section II in order to accommodate the schedules of Commissioners White and Powell, who could not stay for the entire meeting. He noted that there were no speakers addressing agenda items. He also asked for motions regarding the Quarterly Student Activity Fund and the February 2007 financial reports. Motion by Commissioner Brennan to approve the Student Activity Fund report and the February 2007 financial reports. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

VI) Consideration of Resolutions

2007-08: 544-572. Motion to adopt by Commissioner White. Second by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2007-08: 573-583. Motion to adopt by Commissioner Campos. Second by Commissioner Williams. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2007-08: 584. Motion to adopt by Commissioner White. Second by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent.

2007-08: 585-599. Motion to adopt by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner White. Adopted 6-0 with Commissioner Elliott absent except for 585, adopted 5-0 with Commissioner Williams abstaining because of a professional relationship; and 595, adopted 5-1 with Commissioner Williams dissenting.

Commissioner White left the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

II) Commissioner Campos moved acceptance of the February 28, 2008 minutes. Second by Commissioner Brennan. Adopted 4-0 with Commissioners Elliott, Powell and White absent.

III) There were no speakers addressing agenda items.

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Commissioner Powell left the meeting at 6:37 p.m

- IV) Superintendent's Report. Mr. Brizard presented data on 2007 and projected 2008 graduation rates. Presentation attached. President Evans asked about actual June rate, communication to parents and volunteer tutors. Mr. Brizard said the actual June 2008 rate may be higher than 42 percent. Connie Leech, associate chief for secondary education, said parents will be part of the process, particularly pertaining to intervention plan data sheets. Mr. Brizard said he will have Ms. Leech coordinate the volunteer tutor process for this year's seniors. Commissioner Williams asked who will be following up and monitoring the intervention plans and whether the plans will be generated at Central Office or at individual schools. Mr. Brizard said principals will monitor the students' plans and that the plans will be generated at the school level.

Following the Superintendent's Report President Evans recognized Franklin Principals Ali Abdulmateen, Samuel Rodriguez, Mary Aronson, and Donna Gattelaro-Anderson. Each spoke briefly about the student displays in the corridor and the pride they take in their students and staff members. Benjamin Franklin is the largest school in the District and with the Montessori Academy, the only K-12 building. President Evans thanked the principals for hosting the Business Meeting and coordinating all of the extra work required.

- V) Board Standing Committee reports

Quality Assurance: President Evans read the report from Chair Van Henri White. "The Quality Assurance Committee met on Wednesday, March 12th to discuss: The possibility of changing the Committee's name to be more in alignment with the Committee's duties and responsibilities. The QA Committee also received a presentation on the Scholastic Read 180 program. The Committee briefly discussed how systems that provide student information should be integrated. The Committee also recommended that anyone with suggestions on a new name for this Committee, forward their suggestions to one of the Committee members. I visited the Monroe County Jail on March 25 to discuss with a group of youth ages 16-18 years the reasons why they dropped out of school and what would have made them stay in school. I will be submitting a report with recommendations to the Superintendent & and my colleagues on the Board. A special thank you to District employee, Margaret Porter for assisting with facilitating the visit. The next QA meeting will be held on April 10 at 5:30 p.m."

President's Report: Both the East and Charlotte boys' basketball teams advanced to the Section V quarterfinals earlier this month. Our congratulations to these young men, their parents, and their coaches. The Winter 2007-08 Sportsmanship Award was presented to the Edison Swim Team in February by the Rochester-Monroe County Certified Swimming and Diving Officials. This award recognized our athletes for going above and beyond what is normally expected to promote sportsmanship, and reflects their courtesy, respect, encouragement, fairness, good judgment and team spirit. We are even prouder to announce that Wilson, Freddie Thomas, and Charlotte were also nominated for this award. The Wilson X-Cats earned a Gold medal at the regional FIRST Robotics Competition earlier this month. We hear so much negativity about our District, but understand, we do many things well and plan to build on that for the sake of our students and our community. President Evans also announced a change in committee assignments. Commissioner White will move from Finance to Community and Intergovernmental Relations and Commissioner Williams will move from CIGR to Finance effective immediately. Commissioners in attendance concurred.

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Student Representative: Miss Washington reported that the Student Leadership Congress attended a basketball game with their 'little brothers/little sisters' at School 22, are helping the younger students with problems they have at school and at home, and the transition from elementary to secondary school. The SLC is also working a Public Service Announcement. School 58 opened a restaurant, Burritera.

Audit: Chair Allen Williams said the committee will meet April 3 and expects to make a recommendation to the full Board in April for an independent auditor.

Community and Intergovernmental Relations: Chair Melisza Campos thanked the students and staff at Franklin for hosting the Board meeting and spoke highly of her visits to East High School and Schools 1, 5, 9, 12, 17, 22 and the Family Learning Center. Commissioner Campos is Board Liaison to those schools and said the learning environments she saw in her classroom observations were commendable. Regarding CIGR, Commissioner Campos said CIGR met March 10. The Parent Partnership Council representatives were unable to attend the meeting and will be rescheduled. We approved a motion to change the committee name to 'Community and Intergovernmental Partnerships' and respectfully request that this motion be forwarded by the President to the Policy Committee, as it will require an amendment to the Board Bylaws. We also request that an additional proposed amendment to the Bylaws be assigned to Policy by the President. We voted to recommend that the monthly Order of Business be amended to have meetings begin with student recognitions. The Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee is also interested in a review of the Board's overarching process: the standing committee system. We discussed this briefly at our meeting March 10 in our role as facilitators of the Board's working relationship with members of Rochester community. Without rendering judgment on the merits of a standing committee system v. a full Board approach to doing business, we believe the issue is worth exploring. To that end, we recommend that the President delegate the study of this issue. At our meeting, we also heard a presentation from Beverly Jackson of RMBDC on her work with the District from April 2006 through December 2007 regarding Minority/Women Business Enterprise (M/WBE) development. Our next meeting is Thursday, May 1 at 5:30 p.m. As always, fellow commissioners and the public are encouraged to join us. That meeting will be held in Conference Room 3A of Central Office.

President Evans said he would take up the action items in the report under New Business.

Policy: Chair Thomas Brennan said Policy will meet on Tuesday, April 15 at 6 p.m. We have a variety of agenda items, but the most important are: Discussing parent involvement (policies 1900 and 2265); Setting a review schedule for several policies with articulated evaluation processes that have not been followed in the past; Discussion of the 5153 Parent Preference/Managed Choice amendments, the proposed amendment to 6725 Responsible Bidder; an amendment to 5100 Attendance/Participation; and Setting a timeline for the annual review of the Code of Conduct. We made a commitment last year to review this document in the spring going forward. The preliminary plan includes written communication before the end of this month to stakeholder groups, including parents, seeking input. We will likely schedule a public hearing on the code for early May with a subsequent committee meeting. At this point we anticipate a formal recommendation to the Board in May for updates. This schedule is tentative pending the amount of input we receive, and we plan to give parents every opportunity to comment. Commissioner Brennan also reported that RCSD parent involvement and SBPT policies are under review. Commissioner Brennan hosted a public meeting March 12th, at the request of The Rochester Fund for Educational Accountability, to collect evidence of noncompliance with these policies, and thus explore better enforcement mechanisms. Commissioner Elliott also attended. A transcript of the meeting is on the RCSD website. A formal public hearing is expected. While the turnout was not what the

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Rochester Fund leadership projected, important information was conveyed by some of those who attended and spoke. Commissioner Brennan cited the need for better clarity as to board/superintendent commitment to shared decision making, and assuming such a commitment, more direct contact between parents and Board members to address noncompliance, contact unobstructed by either bureaucratic resistance, or by self-appointed gatekeepers invested in a climate of mistrust between board and parents.

Commissioner Brennan cited the theft of documents containing contact information required for appropriate follow-up with parents who attended, as an example of such obstruction. Commissioner Brennan reported that the theft was committed by a guest at the meeting, was recorded on a District security camera, and that the documents were eventually recovered. Commissioner Brennan apologized for the delay in response brought about by this theft, and urged parents and Board to stand united against such misconduct.

Board Governance: *Report submitted in writing in Chair Cynthia Elliott's absence.* The Governance Committee will be meeting on Monday, April 14th to discuss: Board Self-Evaluation and the Evaluation of the Superintendent. The May meeting will be held on May 19th @ 6:00 p.m. in room 3A.

Finance: *Report submitted in writing as Chair Willa Powell had to leave meeting early.* The Finance Committee met on Thursday, March 20 to review the February 2008 Financial Reports and resolutions 573, 574, 576 through 584 and resolutions 595 and 598. The Committee seeks a motion to accept the February 2008 financial reports and recommends the following reviewed resolutions to the Board for approval. Resolutions 573, 574, 576 through 583 and 595 address Educational Facilities Resolutions 584 and 598 address Procurement and Supply. The Committee seeks a motion to accept the 2nd Quarter Student Activity Report. The Finance Committee hosted a public forum on March 20th. The purpose of the forum was to increase the public awareness on the Contract for Excellence. The forum was facilitated by the Youth of Rochester. The next meeting is a Committee of the Whole to review Section 1 of the Budget will be held on April 1st @ 6:00 p.m. The April Finance Committee meeting will be held on April 17th @ 5:30 p.m.

VII) **Unfinished Business from Previous Meetings:** None.

VIII) **New Business:** President Evans referred CIGR's recommendations that its name be changed and the Board Bylaws amended to include student recognition to the Policy Committee for a recommendation to the full Board. He said he would schedule a special meeting in the next two weeks to discuss the standing committee structure of the Board, as he anticipates a diversity of opinions on that issue. Commissioner Campos clarified that creation of an ad hoc committee to study all the ramifications of this issue is an advisable outcome as well. President Evans responded that he will get a date within the next two weeks to discuss all the outcomes.

IX) **Speakers on other than Agenda Items:** Anita Jones thanked the Board for conducting the meeting at Franklin. She also said Board agendas should be publicized sooner so that parents know whether they will be speaking on or off of agenda items. Speaking off agenda items moves speakers to the end of the meeting after a long day. Ms. Jones notes that she works hard to be sure parents have a voice. Sandra Lake urged extra safety measures for East High School, including replacing two School Resource Officers. Glenn Williams discussed parent involvement and pointed out that parents should be involved in the Board's discussion of the standing committee system if the goal is for the Board to be more transparent. He also said parents may initially disagree with an initiative, but if are informed and part of

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the process may end up in agreement. Mr. Williams said he is hopeful Superintendent Brizard will follow through with plans to address the concerns raised at the Wilson meeting March 17. Mr. Williams also said the young women recognized during Women's History Month were powerful and inspirational. Richard Hendricks said everyone wants safe schools – students, parents and staff – and part of the solution is abiding by the rules already in place. He also said something is wrong when resources are focused on the 5 percent ignoring the rules instead of the 95 percent who are. President Evans thanked the speakers.

- X) Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Campos. Second by Commissioner Williams. Adopted 4-0 at 7:22 p.m. with Commissioners Elliott, Powell and White absent.