

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Community & Intergovernmental Relations Committee Meeting
October 23, 2017

MINUTES

Attending:

Commissioners – Vice President Cynthia Elliott, Commissioners Adams and Hallmark

District Staff – Fatimat Reid (Chief of Staff)

Parent Representative – Not in attendance

Guest Presenter – Legislator John Lightfoot

Board Staff – Kallia Wade

Vice President Elliott called the meeting to order at 7:02PM.

I. Review of Minutes of September 14, 2017 CIGR Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Elliott to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2017 Community & Intergovernmental Relations Committee meeting. Seconded by Commissioners Adams, Elliott and White. **Adopted 4-0.**

II. Support for the Local Diploma Initiative

The Committee meeting began with a presentation on the Local Diploma Proposal, conducted by Legislator John Lightfoot. Legislator Lightfoot engaged the Committee by presenting printed resources, and PowerPoint slides to demonstrate the rigor of the Regents program and the requirements for a Regents Diploma. Following this, he noted that a local diploma option could offer District students an additional opportunity to graduate with formal credentials. Legislator Lightfoot concluded his presentation by requesting a letter of support from the Board in order to proceed with the legislative process to establish a local diploma credentialing option.

Questions posed during the presentation with responses where provided:

Commissioner Hallmark: **When did we lose the local diploma option and what is the graduation rate subsequent to phasing this out?**

President White responded, noting the phase out of the option in 2006 and that the graduation rate subsequently raised 1.5%

Commissioner Hallmark: **What is the philosophy around Local Diploma awarding? Will this impact teacher encouragement to funnel students into local diploma track?**

Legislator Lightfoot responded, noting that the presented facts, he again asked for a letter of support to continue to pursue this option.

Commissioner Adams: **What is the definition of “local diploma—what would this look like for students?”**

Commissioner Adams further suggested that the concept be widened to explore more meaningful options that can lead to municipal jobs.

Vice President Elliott: **How would you envision this letter and what would the next steps be if support is provided?**

Legislator Lightfoot responded, indicating that next steps would be to approach the Legislative Council at City Hall, then to approach the Board of Regents to make a similar push.

Commissioner Hallmark: **What are our options re SED Law and how would we guard against lowering the bar and not pushing students towards academic success?**

President White noted the pathways consortium model, but indicated that these options are limited. Commissioner Adams also agreed with Commissioner Hallmark’s sentiment and added that there is a risk of racism, tracking and placement challenges with the proposal. Vice President Elliot also noted that the District is challenged with preparing students to be “career and college ready”, and not just to meet the 65 score minimum, but rather an 85. She challenged whether awarding the local diploma would allow students to succeed in the world. Commissioner Hallmark responded, asking what the local diploma would look like once implemented. Legislator Lightfoot indicated that this has not been narrowed at this point and that it is still being developed. He pointed out that he is currently trying to get the letter of support to give the proposal traction. President White suggested that the Committee hear from Superintendent Deane-Williams regarding the context of the local diploma proposal. He also indicated that she could provide a response on the viability of the proposal for the District.

President White: **What is the timeframe for a response to the local diploma support letter?**

Legislator Lightfoot advised that a response is needed as soon as is possible given the length of time it has been in circulation (over a year). President White noted that more time would be required for the Board to be better informed and to explore the options presented.

Commissioner Hallmark: **Have other districts gone this route with the local diploma? What are their results?**

Legislator Lightfoot noted that RCSD would be the first district to sign on. He also noted the conversation he has had in confidence with members of the Board of Regents. The Committee

Following the Committee's discussion of the proposal with Legislator Lightfoot, the Committee decided that given the aforementioned highlighted points that would need to be considered, The CIGR Committee will continue to explore and discuss Legislator Lightfoot's local diploma proposal at future meetings, but a letter of support will not be provided at this time. Suggestions voiced from the Committee to Legislator Lightfoot included building out the proposal by speaking with educators in the ESA Committee to vet the options presented. Additionally, it was suggested that Legislator Lightfoot speak with Wade-Brown to get support.

Follow-up Item: Invite the Superintendent to attend the net meeting and give her position from a legislative perspective.

III. Legislative Agenda

Moving on in discussion, the committee engaged in conversation re the legislative agenda, which would need to be established and approved before the Legislative Breakfast. Board Staff Kallia presented an updated, more streamlined version of the agenda. Additionally, Board Staff Kallia presented a list of which is to be reviewed by the Committee for any additional updates to be added. VP Elliott noted that support for transportation funding needs to be prioritized on the Agenda. Board Staff Kallia noted that the transportation bill is now dead. Currently there are only bills that might help with transportation from an extracurricular or special education standpoint etc.

Action Item: Chief of Staff Fatimat Reid to present the latest version of the Legislative Agenda to Executive Cabinet for feedback and report back to the Committee with any updates. General Counsel, Karl Kristoff to identify legislative asks that will represent the District's interest on a local, state and national front.

VP Elliott noted her concern that no resolutions have been coming out of the CIGR Committee. Commissioner Adams noted that the Committee had provided several forums and events to the table over the year. The Committee anticipates holding public forums in the Spring and Fall of 2018, establishment of the Communications Plan and the Legislative Breakfast.

IV. Legislative Breakfast Planning

The Community & Intergovernmental Relations Committee members discussed plans to host a Legislative Breakfast on Saturday, November 18th, at 9:00-11:30am. Vice President Elliott asked Board Staff Kallia Wade to address the Committee regarding a call to postpone the Legislative Breakfast. Board Staff Kallia advised the Committee that given the delays in confirming the legislative agenda and limited planning time, it would be best to postpone the Legislative Breakfast on that date. Additionally, she noted the opportunity to select a date that is more closely aligned to the NYS and Federal Budget cycles. The suggested dates being considered at this time are for the last weekend in January or the first weekend in February. Invitations would be sent as soon as the legislative agenda has been fully approved and vetted by the Board. The Committee discussed the dates the Legislative Breakfast have been hosted in the past. Dates have fluctuated between spring and fall.

Action Item: Board Staff Kallia to work with Vice President Elliott to plan the Breakfast for a February date. Commissioner Adams to reach out to see if a representative of the Safe and Supportive Schools Legislation can speak at the Legislative Breakfast.

V. FYI: Legislative Updates

Lastly, the Community & Intergovernmental Relations Committee accepted for review the most recent legislative updates provided in the CIGR meeting agenda packet, in order to inform legislative agenda suggestions.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00PM.

Next Meeting: November 14, 2017