

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Community & Intergovernmental Relations Committee Meeting
October 11, 2018

MINUTES

Attending:

Commissioners – Commissioner Cynthia Elliott (Chair) and Commissioner Funchess

District Staff – Karl Kristoff (General Counsel and Committee Liaison), Elizabeth Mascitti-Miller (Deputy Superintendent)

Parent Representative – Not in attendance

Board Staff – Kallia Wade

Other- Dr. Gidget Hoph (CEO, Goodwill of the Finger Lakes), Dr. Frederick Jefferson (Excel Center advocate), Mary Boland (Vice President of Communications & Community Relations, Goodwill of the Finger Lakes)

Commissioner Elliott called the meeting to order at 6:03PM.

I. Update on the Fall Community Forum

Board staff, Kallia Wade, advised the Committee about final updates on the fall community and talked through the agenda items in detail. Commissioner Funchess, Policy Committee Chair, indicated that she would be unable to attend the forum because of a conflicting event. She noted that Commissioner Beatriz Lebron would be stepping in on behalf of the Policy Committee to conduct the Parent and Family Engagement Policy presentation. Commissioner Funchess also advised that she would be working with Commissioner Lebron to review the presentation, to ensure that all related information is provided to forum attendees.

The Committee closed the conversation on the fall forum agenda by discussing the attendance component. Deputy Superintendent, Elizabeth Mascitti-Miller endorsed Ms. Betsy Hoffer, Associate Director of Attendance, as a presenter on the topic. She advised that Ms. Hoffer is an advocate for finding strategies when systems are broken. The Committee agreed that chronic absenteeism is as a result of issues not addressed in schools, and noted that the system should be informative rather than punitive.

II. Discussion on the Excel Center Initiative

General Counsel and Committee Chair, Karl Kristoff, led the conversation by noting that the Excel Center is an additional pathway towards a diploma and introduced members of the Excel Center Initiative, including Dr. Gidget Hoph (CEO, Goodwill of the Finger Lakes), Dr.

Frederick Jefferson (Excel Center advocate), and Mary Boland (Vice President of Communications & Community Relations, Goodwill of the Finger Lakes).

Dr. Hopf provided an overview of the Goodwill of the Finger Lakes (GFF) and provided an informational handout with more information to support the group's presentation. Dr. Hopf indicated that GFF has traditionally been an institution that has helped prepare persons to be self-proficient. She noted that the Excel Center was developed as a means to fill a gap—where the traditional GED may not be as successful. She noted that the Initiative has been successfully rolled out in Indiana and could provide opportunities in Rochester if it is able to gain legislative hold and allowed to function through a demonstration period. Dr. Jefferson joined the conversation and stated that research shows that acquisition of a diploma provides a much better launching pad for individuals post high school. Both he and Dr. Hopf advised the following regarding the Excel Center:

- Provides a support system for students (daycare, advising, accelerated programs)
- Has a workforce component where students can earn credit in several subject fields (i.e. pharm tech, I.T., teaching, baking etc.)
- Assists in building intergenerational modeling behavior within families, where parents attend school with their children and achieve shared success
- Assists in disrupting attendance challenges
- Allows students to take advantage of intersections and opens up pathways
- Provides opportunity for college and jobs
- Provides a standard Regents diploma
- Provides a life coach- most important component of the program to help address student barriers to attendance etc.

In addition to discussing the benefits of the Initiative, the Committee also engaged in a question and answer segment regarding the potential for the Excel Center in the Rochester City School District. The group discussed what would be needed to get the Initiative off the ground. Counsel Kristoff noted that in order for this to take place, the State would first have to give its blessing. Following this, the Board would have to approve the existence of the program as a school within the District, as the District would have purview over the Initiative.

The meeting also featured a discussion of the differences between the Excel Center Initiative and the District's own adult education program. The Committee sought to establish if there would be competing interests or if the Initiative would take students/funding away. In regards to funding during the demonstration period, Excel Center Initiative advocates noted that this would come by way of funding through the Department of Labor, private sector contributions, and an established \$2M budget to start. The advocates also noted that the demonstration period would allow them to establish where future funding would be raised. They advised that the Initiative does not use K-12 dollars in Indiana, where it is funded through a state line item.

In concluding the presentation, Commissioner Elliott asked the Excel Center Initiative advocates to state what was being asked of the CIGR Committee. Counsel Kristoff noted that this presentation was an informational item. However, he advised that there may be an 'ask' in the future for Board support if/when the State Education Department approves the

Initiative. Dr. Hopf followed this by stating that her group would like to say that they have the support of the Committee and Board as they go into discussions with State Ed.

Commissioner Elliot thanked the members of the Excel Center Initiative on behalf of the CIGR Committee and asked for updates as the group moves to gain State approval.

Action Items: The Commissioners noted a desire to follow-up on information on adult education programs. Board Staff, Kallia Wade, to follow up with Vice President Powell with regard to combining the FMP discussion between

Meeting adjourned at 7:16PM.

Next Meeting: November 1, 2018