

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Policy Review and Development Committee Meeting

April 26, 2016

MINUTES

Attendance

Commissioners – Commissioner Willa Powell (Chair), Commissioner Mary Adams, Commissioner Jose Cruz, Board President Van White

Parent Representative – Barb Van Kerkhove

District Liaison – Charles Johnson (General Counsel and District Liaison)

Presenters/Guests – Dr. Christiana Otuwa (Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning)

Board Staff – Mia Johnson

Commissioner Powell called the meeting to order.

I. Presentation: School Climate and Proposed (Draft) Policy 5300: Code of Conduct

Dr. Otuwa read directly from the School Climate presentation published on Board Docs. Dr. Otuwa additionally described the following:

- the goal is to have every member and stakeholder of the school community involved in school climate and knowledgeable about the Code of Conduct
- the role of Banke Awopteu-McCullough, the project manager for the Code of Conduct, as engaging with various stakeholders to increase buy-in
- she is looking to move the Disciplinary Responses Matrix within the Code of Conduct as oppose to an appendix of the document
- there has been a lot of complaints regarding classroom removal and short-term suspensions and parents must be notified of both
- within the five days of the Suspension Hearing, students can attend LyncX or School No. 29 depending on their grade
- there is a need to evaluate the Code of Conduct on an annual basis with an advisory committee established by the Board
- the Administration will be responsible for collecting, analyzing and responding to data concerns regarding the school climate initiatives

Commissioner Adams expressed appreciation towards those involved in the work including students, parents, teachers, administrators, and more. She emphasized that school climate is on-going, multi-year work. She stated that the major priority is to steward the language of the Code and there has been an attempt to be inclusive. She stated that the role of the Policy Committee is to listen and continue to listen, a public hearing is a state requirement, and a need to accommodate to groups of people who desire to meet with them to hear such arguments. She stated that the

resources are a major priority in order to shift how student discipline is handled in a more supportive way.

Commissioner Powell stated that as a living document, the Board can amend it and make changes if needed.

Ms. Van Kerkhove expressed appreciation for the changes made and the collaborative engagement. She stated that this process gave her hope and it was great to have such input in the process as a parent.

Commissioner Cruz thanked all those who are involved. He asked the following questions to be considered at a later time: (1) How will this be rolled out into the schools and community; (2) What is the timeline for the establishment of the advisory committee; (3) What is the plan for professional development among staff to ensure they understand the investigations' standards and limitations.

Dr. Otuwa responded that they started looking at the process where schools have the option to select based on a three-year roll out. She stated that the first-year, self-selected schools will be trained. Commissioner Adams responded that there are work groups that address Commissioner Cruz's questions around informing the community, assessment, and implementation. She further explained that there will be pilot schools as well as baseline Districtwide work.

President White stated that the Board has participated in courageous conversations that will continue. He stated that the Code of Conduct will not work unless it is adequately supported and the importance of ensuring that the resources are provided.

Commissioner Powell stated that the Code of Conduct is currently in the manual under Series 5000: Student section. She stated that all stakeholders, including visitors, should be held to the same behavior standards. She described that at the last Policy meeting there was a discussion about changing the Code of Conduct policy number to be included in the Series 1000: Districtwide policies.

Motion by Commissioner Adams to advance the Code of Conduct to the full Board as an information item. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Vote 4-0 with concurrence from the Parent Representative.

Commissioner Powell explained the Board process to the formulation, adoption, and amendments of policies. She suggested that the public hearing occurs days prior or after the Code of Conduct becomes a Discussion Item. She stated in between the stages that the language of the Code of Conduct could be changed and that the Board would need redlined copies from the current draft.

II. Follow-up Items

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Powell to adjourn. Adopted 4-0 with concurrence from the Parent Representative.

Meeting adjourned.

