

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Policy Review and Development Committee Meeting

January 10, 2017

MINUTES

Attendance

Commissioners – Commissioner Powell (Chair); Commissioners Cruz and Adams

District Staff – Steve Carling, General Counsel; Dr. Robin Hooper, Executive Director of Early Childhood Education; Andrew MacGowan, Project Administrator; Kisha Morgan, Data Administrator and Special Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent for Teaching & Learning

Board Staff – Debra Flanagan

Commissioner Powell called the meeting to order at 5:59PM.

I. Review Minutes of December 1, 2016 Policy Committee Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Adams to approve the minutes of December 1, 2016 Policy Committee Meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. **Adopted 3-0.**

II. Discuss Data and Potential Revision of Day Care policy (4324.1)

Kisha Morgan provided an overview of factors that affect the District’s Day Care policy: demographics, current needs, and changes in New York State child care policies.

Andrew MacGowan reviewed data regarding teen births in the City of Rochester from 1990 to 2014, providing the following comparisons:

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Number of Births</u>		<u>Birth Rate</u>	
	<u>1990</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2014</u>
10-14:	51	6	7.57	0.91
15-17:	396	109	101.96	24.49
18-19:	987	326	127.68	39.02
10-19:	1038	332	71.76	22.19

Mr. MacGowan added that the City of Rochester had among the highest teen birth rates in New York State in the 1990s, and this rate has fallen dramatically over the last 14 years or so. He pointed out that over 50% of the infants born to teen mothers at St. Mary’s Hospital in 1991

tested positive for cocaine. Mr. MacGowan noted that the City of Rochester is entering an opioid epidemic, but the impact on infants born with addictions is not yet known.

Mr. MacGowan recalled that in the 1990s, the District had day care centers in high schools and Young Mothers was a robust, high-quality program. He reported that for the population of youth that the District serves, teen births have fallen from 447 in 1990 to 115 in 2014 (for ages 10-17).

Commissioner Powell stated that she is pleased to see the reduction in births among girls aged 10-14 because it is frightening to think of them giving birth and becoming a parent at such a young age. Mr. MacGowan noted that the annual data from 1990-2014 indicate a steady decline in teen births over this time period.

Mr. MacGowan explained that three different State agencies were merged in 1998 to form the Office of Children and Family Services. He reported that the RCSD Early Childhood Education Department has a close collegial relationship with the NYS Office of Children and Family Services: representatives from this office serve on the RCSD UPK Policy Advisory Council; assisted the District with expanding the Early PreK program in January 2016; and participated in the District's RFP process for selecting partners in this program.

Mr. MacGowan pointed out that the Office of Children and Family Services is far more stringent in terms of oversight, child care standards, and enforcement than its predecessors. Dr. Hooper stated that this office will review all PreK programs in the District in April 2017, which will include examining the violation record of all community-based partners. She explained that the Office of Children and Family Services regulations were made much more stringent approximately two years ago. Dr. Hooper reported that some of the regulations are quite challenging and costly, such as requiring a minimum of five sinks in every child care establishment and other facilities requirements.

Commissioner Cruz inquired about the appeals process in the event that the review by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services cites the District or community partners for violations. Dr. Hooper replied that the appeals process is quite lengthy, and the citations are typically quite clear. For this reason, agencies tend to rectify the problem leading to the citation, rather than appeal the decision. She stated that she maintains a record of uncorrected violations, and meets with the directors of these agencies to discuss options.

Commissioner Powell asked whether the Child Care Council keeps agencies apprised of changes in child care regulations and circumstances that might lead to a potential violation. Dr. Hooper responded that the Child Care Council does distribute this information to local agencies and also offers training, but frequent regulatory changes make it difficult to keep current. She added that the complexity of regulations and escalating costs have also impeded opening of new child care centers. Mr. MacGowan commented that the entry costs are quite prohibitive, and the County offers limited reimbursement to established child care centers. He stated that the 25 community-based organizations with which the District partners have been cutting back – particularly on programs for infants and toddlers.

Mr. MacGowan stated that he is not familiar with the Young Mothers program as currently configured, but he was involved in evaluation of the program in the 1990s. He reported that

repeated evaluation of the Young Mothers program at that time indicated that it was of high quality and effective in retaining teen mothers in school and on the path to graduation. Mr. MacGowan stated that the administration eliminated all of the day care centers in high schools in the 1990s. He noted that he does not have current data for the Young Mothers program, which has been restructured since the 1990s.

Commissioner Powell explained that she requested data regarding trends in teen births to ascertain the need for the Day Care policy. She stated that she does not want to recommend rescinding the policy without fully exploring the possibility of offering a child care program at least for students in the Young Mothers program. Commissioner Powell observed that recent cutbacks in child care for infants and young children is a compelling reason to examine this issue further. She noted that it would be useful to know where teen mothers are currently obtaining child care and the resources available to them. Commissioner Powell asserted that even if child care can be provided by a family member, this presents problems to the extent that it interferes with the family member's ability to sustain a paid job. She inquired about conducting a survey of the students in the Young Mothers program to obtain further information of their child care needs, how these needs are being met, and the possibility of remaining in the program until graduation if child care was to be provided. Commissioner Powell requested input from her colleagues about conducting a survey to obtain this information.

Commissioner Cruz commented that he would like to obtain feedback from students in the Young Mothers program, but there would have to be a sufficient number of students willing to commit to remaining in the program to warrant the additional costs. He added that the survey should stipulate that it is exploratory in nature, and not indicative of a guarantee that child care will be provided to program participants in the future.

Commissioner Adams observed that allowing students to remain in the Young Mothers program would increase the student population, and provide greater stability in resources and program structure. She suggested conducting the survey over a period of time due to the transience of this population and the small number of participants at any one given time. Commissioner Adams added that the District should be exploring day care options with family- and community-based providers to enable schools to refer District families to resources for child care before and after school. She noted that this type of assistance would be valuable in reducing cross-zone transportation for child care, and lead to higher quality child care services. Commissioner Adams stated that family- and community-based child care services could be integrated with some of the early childhood improvement planning that has been done in the District. She asserted that these options should be explored, particularly by the Child Care Council and official agencies.

Dr. Hooper stated that if an established agency has additional capacity, the District needs to know. She noted that there are frequent changes in child care services because they are highly dependent upon County subsidies. Dr. Hooper expressed the hope that County day care subsidies are prioritized and provided to students in the Young Mothers program.

Commissioner Powell pointed out that Monroe County reduced funding by \$1M several years ago for child care subsidies, and advocating for restoration of these subsidies is difficult in light

of declining birth rates. She added that the teens continuing to have children are among the poorest of the poor in our community.

Commissioner Powell reported that the budget accommodates a maximum capacity of 80 students in the Young Mothers program, which has not been attained for some time. She recalled that the District used to provide yellow bus service for these students, but then switched to RTS without any dedicated routes. She explained that these changes were made partially due to a lack of evidence that providing transportation services was leading to increased attendance. However, the data included students in the Interim Health Academy whose health concerns affected attendance, and the District had also eliminated day care services and this affected attendance for the students in the Young Mothers program.

Commissioner Powell expressed the hope that the Day Care policy could at least be revised to require principals and counselors to actively assist teen mothers in obtaining child care. Although many principals and counselors may not be aware of child care resources, she stated that she hoped that referrals could be offered to quality child care services in close proximity to the student's school or home.

Commissioner Cruz asked about the costs involved in conducting a survey of students in the Young Mothers program. Mr. MacGowan replied that this is a relatively small population and consent would have to be obtained. He added that a survey would also have to be approved by the Administration, since staff time will be required. Mr. Carling suggested that Kisha Morgan present the proposal for conducting a survey to the Administration.

Action Item: Kisha Morgan will discuss these concerns with the Administration and the possibility of conducting a survey of child care resources available to students in the Young Mothers program.

Commissioner Cruz stated that subject to the Administration's approval for the survey, members of the Policy Committee would like information about any other current efforts to survey local child care services, the specific objectives of the survey, ways in which the survey will be used, and estimated costs.

Commissioner Powell emphasized the importance of having this additional information to be able to determine whether the existing Day Care policy should be modified or rescinded.

III. Proposed Revisions to Visitors to Schools Policy (1240)

Commissioner Adams noted that she had some suggestions for further revisions to the Visitors to Schools policy, which have been incorporated into the proposal presented this evening.

Mr. Carling stated that the proposed policy changes strike a balance between encouraging parent participation and the need for classroom management and security in schools.

Motion by Commissioner Cruz to approve the proposed revisions to the Visitors to Schools policy (1240). Seconded by Commissioner Adams. **Adopted 3-0.**

IV. Review Proposed Revisions to Series 2000 Policies Recommended by General Counsel

A. Code of Ethics (2160)

Mr. Carling explained that the proposed policy contains changes previously discussed by the Policy Committee, primarily in clarifying that building-based administrators are responsible for overseeing all staff in the building and therefore are prohibited from having a romantic and/or sexual relationship with any staff member in their building. He added that all staff members are prohibited from hiring, promoting, supervising, evaluating, disciplining, or terminating an employee with whom they have had a romantic and/or sexual relationship.

Motion by Commissioner Cruz to approve the proposed changes to the Code of Ethics (2160). Seconded by Commissioner Adams. **Adopted 3-0.**

B. Board Bylaws (2300)

Mr. Carling stated that the proposed revision to the Board Bylaws stipulates that the Board is required to specify the reason for meeting in Executive Session, as mandated by recent court rulings regarding Open Meetings Law.

Debra Flanagan announced that additional changes are being made to the Board Bylaws by members of the Board Governance Committee. She conveyed a request from Ms. Shanai Lee, Board staff support to the Board Governance Committee, to postpone consideration of this proposed policy to allow time to incorporate the recommended changes from the Board Governance Committee.

Commissioner Powell pointed out that the revisions recommended by the General Counsel are essentially technical in nature and intended to comply with recent legal interpretations of Open Meetings Law. For this reason, she suggested expediting adoption of these proposed policy amendments at this point and considering changes recommended by the Board Governance Committee at a future date.

Commissioner Adams recommended addressing all proposed changes to the Board Bylaws at one time.

Commissioner Cruz concurred, suggesting that the proposed policy be tabled until the recommendations have been received from the Board Governance Committee.

Commissioner Powell observed that the Board's practices have been in accordance with the recent legal interpretations of Open Meetings Law.

Motion by Commissioner Adams to table consideration of proposed amendments to the Board Bylaws until recommendations have been received from the Board Governance Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. **Adopted 3-0.**

C. Videoconferencing policy (2350)

Mr. Carling stated that the proposed policy has been revised to reflect the fact that a number of different platforms exist for videoconferencing – not just Skype.

Commissioner Powell stated that she would like to expedite adoption of this policy because the proposed amendments are technical and not substantive.

Motion by Commissioner Cruz to approve the proposed revision of the Videoconferencing policy. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. **Adopted 3-0.**

Action Item: Ms. Flanagan will draft a memo to Board members regarding the technical nature of the proposed amendments to the Videoconferencing policy (2350), and distribute the proposed policy revision as an Information Item.

Commissioner Powell noted that she will request a motion to waive the three-step policy adoption process outlined in “Formulation, Adoption and Amendment of Policies” (2410) to enable the Board to vote on the amended policy in the January 26th Board Business Meeting.

D. Policy Dissemination (2450)

Mr. Carling stated that the Policy Dissemination policy has been revised to reflect technological development and current practices in updating and posting all Board policies on the District website. He recalled that Commissioner Hallmark had expressed concerns about providing a hardcopy of the Policy Manual to new Board members. He stated that this concern has been addressed by adding a provision that a hardcopy will be provided to new Board members upon request. To ensure accessibility of Board policies to all, Mr. Carling stated that the policy includes a provision to retain a hardcopy of the Policy Manual in the Board Office for those who have technology access issues.

Commissioner Adams suggested that the exhibit attached to this policy be revised to strike the phrase “a copy of” because this implies that a hardcopy paper version of policies has been provided.

Motion by Commissioner Cruz to approve revised Policy Dissemination policy (2450), with the changes recommended by Commissioner Adams. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. **Adopted 3-0.**

E. Membership in School Boards Associations (2530)

Mr. Carling reported that there was a robust discussion in the last Policy Committee meeting about the specific organizations that should be included in this policy. He noted that the recommendations of the Committee have been incorporated into the current policy proposal, specifically the National School Boards Association, Council

of Urban Boards of Education, Council of Great City Schools and the Conference of the Big 5 School Districts.

Motion by Commissioner Cruz to approve the proposed Membership in School Boards Association policy (2530). Seconded by Commissioner Adams. **Adopted 3-0.**

V. Proposed Revision of School-Based Planning Policy (2265)

Mr. Carling stated that he is unclear why this policy is on the agenda, as he was not aware that a revision to the School-Based Planning policy was needed.

Ms. Flanagan stated that she thought that this was needed as a follow-up item from a previous Policy Committee meeting. After reviewing the minutes from the October 13, 2016 Policy Committee meeting, she reported that the School-Based Planning policy had been discussed at that time and no recommendations were made to revise the policy. Ms. Flanagan apologized for the confusion.

VI. Discuss Foreign Exchange Students Policy – NYSSBA Sample Policy 5152.1

Commissioner Powell recalled that consideration of a policy regarding foreign exchange students arose because tuition is not currently being provided to the District for these students. The primary reason that tuition is not being collected for foreign exchange students is because school principals either don't support collecting tuition from these students or may be unaware that this should be reported. She added that there may be a concern that if tuition is collected, the organizations that sponsor foreign exchange students will begin referring them away from the District in favor of local suburban school districts.

Mr. Carling stated that he would like to defer consideration of a new policy regarding foreign exchange students to the incoming General Counsel.

Motion by Commissioner Adams to table consideration of a Foreign Exchange Students policy until the new General Counsel has had an opportunity for review. Seconded by Commissioner Cruz. **Adopted 3-0.**

VII. Selection of Parent Representative

Commissioner Powell stated that the Parent Advisory Council reviewed the applications, and provided their recommendations of the top three candidates to serve as a Parent Representative to the Policy Committee. She requested feedback from Committee members regarding these recommendations.

Commissioner Cruz commented on the first choice recommendation from the Parent Advisory Council, stating that he appreciated the candidate's efforts in composing an essay about serving on the Policy Committee and their considerable experience at the school level.

Commissioner Powell concurred, adding that this candidate also has a child in high school and it would be valuable to obtain their perspective. She noted that the District has difficulty engaging parents with children at the high school level.

Commissioner Adams expressed interest in the third-choice candidate because of their apparent solution-focused perspective and pursuit of a college degree in human services. She added that she would defer to the preferences of her colleagues in this selection.

Action Item: Ms. Flanagan will notify the candidate selected by the members of the Policy Committee to serve as their Parent Representative, and offer opportunities to the other candidates to serve on other Board committees – if interested.

VIII. Review Policy Deliverables

A. Medicaid Compliance Policy (8600)

Commissioner Powell noted that the staff member who examined the Medicaid Compliance policy essentially stated that the policy has been effective, and no changes were recommended. She pointed out that the report also included detail about District practices to ensure compliance with Medicaid laws, regulations, and policies.

B. Equivalence in Instructional Staff & Materials (4010)

Commissioner Powell observed that the evaluation report for the Equivalence in Instructional Staff & Materials also provided considerable detail regarding the ways in which the District ensures compliance with laws, regulations, and policies at the federal, state and local level.

C. Multicultural/Global Education Policy (4350)

Commissioner Powell reported that the Administration has requested additional time to evaluate the Multicultural/Global Education policy until a new Director of African – African American Studies has been selected and has had an opportunity for review and comment.

Meeting adjourned at 7:17PM.

Ms. Flanagan announced that the next Policy Committee meeting date is to be determined, as the Board is currently revising the committee meeting schedule.