

**ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Policy Review and Development Committee Meeting**

**March 13, 2018**

**MINUTES**

**Attendance**

Commissioners – Commissioners White, Powell, Sheppard, LeBron, and Hallmark

District Staff – Karl Kristoff, General Counsel

Commissioner White called the meeting to order at 5:30PM.

**I. Review Minutes of the February 8, 2018 Policy Committee Meeting**

**Motion** by Commissioner Powell to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2018 Policy Committee meeting. Seconded by Commissioner LeBron. **Adopted 3-0.**

**II. Review Feedback regarding Proposed *Equity and Educational Excellence Policy (0201)***

Karl Kristoff noted that the proposed *Equity and Educational Excellence Policy* was submitted to the RCSD Parent Advisory Council and the School Climate Advisory Committee for feedback. He summarized the main concerns cited by the Parent Advisory Council:

- Increase the diversity of teaching staff and of administrators, particularly to ensure that those making decisions affecting students reflect the composition of the student population

Mr. Kristoff pointed out that the proposed policy states: “The RCSD will recruit racially conscious and culturally competent administrative, instructional and support personnel”.

- Fill the position of Director of African – African-American Studies

While this is not an issue that can be addressed through policy, Mr. Kristoff stated that there is widespread agreement regarding the need to fill this position and the District has been actively engaged in recruitment. He noted that a satisfactory candidate has not yet been found.

- Require all students to learn African – African-American Studies and Latino Studies

Mr. Kristoff stated that the proposed policy includes “Providing high quality, culturally relevant and responsive curricula for all students and teachers, regardless of learning styles”. He added that the Policy Committee must determine whether this provision is sufficiently inclusive, or whether a specific requirement should be established.

- Implement and enforce the *Parent & Family Engagement Policy* (1900) with fidelity

Mr. Kristoff noted the validity of this concern, but that it cannot be addressed by revising the *Equity and Educational Excellence Policy* currently under consideration.

Commissioner LeBron asserted that the feedback from these parent and community groups is for the District to establish an African – African American Studies and Latino Studies curriculum. Mr. Kristoff suggested amending the proposed policy to stipulate that the District is responsible for “Providing high quality culturally relevant and responsive curricula, including African – African American and Latino Studies, for all students and teachers, regardless of learning styles”.

It was noted that the main concerns cited above were presented by the RCSD Parent Advisory Council, and that feedback had not been presented from the School Climate Advisory Committee or any other parent or community group.

Commissioner White suggested that the Policy Committee vote on forwarding to the full Board the proposed policy with the amendment recommended by Mr. Kristoff. He pointed out that additional feedback can be obtained in the meantime, and any additional changes can be proposed from the dais in a Board meeting.

Commissioner Powell cautioned against proposing policy changes from the dais during a Board meeting because the specific language proposed may not reflect the original intent of the policy or the intent of the groups providing feedback. She recommended voting on advancing the policy proposal to the full Board at this point and following the usual policy adoption process. Commissioner Powell stated that the policy can always be revised later if additional feedback comes to light.

**Motion** by Commissioner Powell to advance the proposed *Equity and Educational Excellence Policy* (0201) to the full Board for consideration, with the amendment recommended by Mr. Kristoff. Seconded by Commissioner LeBron. **Adopted 3-0.**

### **III. Discuss New Proposed *Sexual Harassment Policy* (0110)**

Mr. Kristoff presented a new proposed *Sexual Harassment Policy*, which is based on a sample policy from the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA). He explained that the District is legally required to have a policy in place specifically addressing the requirements of Title IX. Mr. Kristoff reported that the Superintendent is considering substantial changes to the NYSSBA sample regulation because it does not comport with the much more thorough process used in the District for handling reports and investigations. He stated that he has modified the NYSSBA sample regulation, and the revision is currently under review by the Cabinet.

Commissioner Hallmark observed that the current policy proposal is much more inclusive than the NYSSBA sample policy in addressing gender and sexual harassment. She inquired whether the proposed *Sexual Harassment Policy* would address the civil rights of transgender individuals. Mr. Kristoff replied that the proposed policy addresses the rights of transgender individuals, which are also protected under several other policies. He noted that there have been approximately four instances of transgender issues in the District over the last 14 months of his tenure.

**Motion** by Commissioner Hallmark to approve the proposed *Sexual Harassment Policy* (0110). Seconded by Commissioner Powell. **Adopted 3-0.**

#### **IV. Action Plan for Addressing Backlog of Policies in Need of Update based on NYSSBA Recommendations**

Commissioner White noted that Commissioner Funchess had apparently charged Debra Flanagan, Board staff in support of the Policy Committee, with developing an Action Plan to address the backlog of policies requiring updates. He reported that Ms. Flanagan was unable to attend this evening's meeting.

A memo from Ms. Flanagan stated that she will present to the Policy Committee a minimum of three policies requiring minor revision in each monthly meeting.

#### **V. Meeting Schedule Conflicts**

Commissioner White noted that the current schedule for Policy Committee meetings conflicts with other critical meetings for adopting the 2018-19 RCSD Budget, specifically on May 15<sup>th</sup> and June 19<sup>th</sup>.

Members of the Policy Committee decided to leave it up to Ms. Flanagan to identify alternate dates for the upcoming Policy Committee meetings in May and June.

Meeting adjourned at 5:49PM.

As members of the Policy Committee were wrapping up the meeting, a member of the School Climate Advisory Committee and Board support staff member Kallia Wade presented feedback regarding the proposed *Equity and Educational Excellence Policy* (0201).

**Motion** by Commissioner Powell to reconvene the Policy Committee meeting. Seconded by Commissioner LeBron. **Adopted 3-0.**

The Policy Committee reconvened at 5:50PM.

Commissioner Powell noted that the recommendations of the School Climate Advisory Committee were rather lengthy and involved proposing alternate and precise policy language. She pointed out that the members of the Policy Committee have not had an opportunity to review and consider the recommendations prior to this evening's meeting. For this reason, Commissioner Powell proposed that members of the Policy Committee review the School Climate Advisory Committee's recommendations and meet in a few days to discuss them. She suggested convening a Policy Committee meeting for this purpose on Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, prior to the Excellence in Student Achievement Committee Meeting of the Whole.

**Motion** by Commissioner Powell to rescind previous motion to approve the proposed *Equity and Educational Excellence Policy* (0201). Seconded by Commissioner White. **Adopted 3-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 5:56PM.