

# ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Business Meeting

October 26, 2017

**Board Members in Attendance:** President Van Henri White, Vice President Elliott, Commissioner Mary Adams, Commissioner José Cruz, Commissioner Malik Evans, Commissioner Elizabeth Hallmark, and Commissioner Willa Powell.

**Board Members Excused:** None.

**Administration and Board Officers in Attendance:** Superintendent Barbara Deane-Williams, Deputy Superintendent Lawrence Wright, EPO Superintendent Shaun Nelms, and District Clerk Shanai Lee.

President White convened the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

- I. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by a young audience member.
- II. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Motion to accept the minutes of the September 28<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting, September 28<sup>th</sup> Contract for Excellence Hearing, September 28<sup>th</sup> Charter School Hearing, and the October 5<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting was made by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Motion carries 7-0.
- III. **Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item:** No speakers were present.
- IV. **Speakers Not Addressing an Agenda Item:** Community member Peter Burkin spoke about an initiative for bullying prevention and intervention. Staff member Susan Agostinelli spoke about the work of School Psychologists. Staff members Angie Rivera and Kathleen Sobers spoke about the need for compensation for toileting students. Staff member Maria Gonzalez spoke about the recent changes in special education assignments and the need for enhanced special education supports for students and families.
- V. **Superintendents Reports:** Dr. Nelms spoke about recently scheduled parent-teacher conferences where he hosted over 200 attendees. He also detailed a recent DTSDE Review and NYSED visit where the school's demonstrable improvement indicators were discussed and recommendations were received that focused on language targets, monitoring of student attendance and communication with the school's English Language Learner families. Dr. Nelms also mentioned his work with the See Our Truth Project which is designed to promote teacher and school leader diversity. In concluding the presentation, Dr. Nelms mentioned that East will host a presentation of the play Collard Green Curves which is based on a book by an East alumnus. The storyline addresses childhood obesity, bullying and healthy living.

Deputy Superintendent Lawrence Wright delivered a presentation that highlighted Path Forward initiative of the District. He presented some of the common themes that were discussed in various forums with stakeholders, including a student summit, community engagement meetings, and teacher forums. In concluding the presentation, Mr. Wright announced next steps in data-gathering and communication of the resulting strategies.

## **VI. Board Reports:**

### **Audit Committee**

**Chair Mary Adams:** Commissioner Adams requested a motion to accept the 2017-2018 Audit Plan. Motion to accept the plan was made by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner Cruz. Motion carries 7-0.

### **Finance Committee**

**Chair Jose Cruz:** The Finance Committee met on Thursday, October 19th to consider Resolution Nos. 2017-18: 340 through 346, 350 and 355 through 358. The Finance Committee recommends approval of the September 2017 Financial Report, the Final Quarter (Annual) Elementary Activity Accounts & Student Activity Funds Report, and the Quarterly Change Order Report for July- September 2017. Motion to accept the reports was made by Commissioner Cruz and seconded by Commissioner Evans. Motion carries 7-0. The following resolutions were reviewed by the Finance Committee, and are advanced to the Board with recommendation: Resolution 340 for Transportation; Resolution 341 for Procurement & Supply; Resolutions 342 through 345 for Facilities; Resolution 346 for Information Management & Technology; and Resolutions 350 and 355 through 358 for the Other category. The next Finance Committee Meeting is scheduled for November 8, 2017.

### **Excellence in Student Achievement Committee**

**Chair Malik Evans:** The Excellence in Student Achievement Committee held a Meeting of the Whole on Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, to review and discuss the 2017-18 School Comprehensive Education Plans for the District's priority and focus schools. This year marks the first time that the NYS Education Department calibrated the plan for each school, providing feedback specifically on the following required elements: needs statement, goals, leading indicators, and an Action Plan.

A teacher from each school will be trained by the Office of Receivership and School Innovation regarding school reform practices, progress monitoring, and communication with stakeholders to support the School-Based Planning Team in implementing the Comprehensive Education Plan for the school.

All of the School Comprehensive Education Plans are aligned with the District Comprehensive Improvement Plan and the four essential pillars that form the foundation for transformation in the District. All of the plans also utilize the same five measures for monitoring progress.

Most of the discussion in the meeting focused on concerns about executing the school plans, and ways that staff at each level will be held accountable for these efforts. Superintendent Deane-Williams and Beth Mascitti-Miller described specific practices being utilized to enhance accountability and monitor progress. The Superintendent discussed the importance of predictive analytics to enable School Chiefs and principals to obtain an accurate assessment of future progress toward goals based on current conditions. All of this work is new and involves a shift in organizational culture, which will take time – but it is on the right trajectory. We all hope to see the results of these efforts materialize in having more schools removed from the priority and focus lists.

In addition, a resolution (Resolution No. 2017-18: 363) was presented to the members of the Excellence in Student Achievement Committee for a contract with the International Center for Leadership in Education. The purpose of the contract would be for this organization to promote rigor and relevance in literacy in four receivership schools in the District (School No. 9, 41, 45, and Monroe High School). The members of the International Center would work in the classroom with instructional coaches and with

school principals to enhance literacy instruction. The International Center for Leadership in Education was selected because of the success of their work with the Poughkeepsie, Tulsa and Garden Grove school districts. In the ensuing discussion, Committee members expressed concern about the specific deliverables to be provided in return for a contract of over \$500K; and the cultural relevance of the proposed contractors' literacy approach and curriculum. Additional supporting information was requested regarding Resolution No. 2017-18: 363.

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for November 14, 2017.

### **Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee (CIGR)**

**Chair Cynthia Elliott:** The Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee did not meet since the last Business Meeting. No report was submitted.

### **Policy Committee**

**Chair Willa Powell:** The Policy Committee met on Tuesday, October 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss a number of policy proposals and related concerns:

- Concerns related to the use of electronic devices issued to students and methods for protecting their privacy, particularly outside of school: Iman Abid, representative from the ACLU, presented a sample policy and discussed issues related to student privacy protections with the increasing dissemination of electronic devices for use outside of school district purview.
  - One of the major concerns regards monitoring students' use of these devices and the information that they may have accessed. Ms. Abid emphasized the importance of clarifying the way in which this information will be gathered and used, and who will have access to it. She gave an example of students obtaining information about reproductive health, which the school district discovered through monitoring the students' online activity. Apparently this school district then reported this to the students' parents. This example illustrates the need for clear guidelines and information about monitoring students' online activity, and for establishing due process procedures in the event that a student is alleged to have violated school district policy.
  - Although RCSD installs a firewall on each electronic device that is issued to a student to prevent access to obscene, offensive or violent material, the District does not currently monitor students' online activity. However, this could easily become an issue in the future. The Policy Committee has requested that Board staff obtain sample related policies from the NYS School Boards Association, and that all of these sample policies be reviewed by General Counsel to provide recommendations in the December meeting.
- Findings from a recent survey of parenting students: A survey of parenting students was conducted earlier this year in an attempt to determine the child care needs of these students, and to ascertain whether the existing Day Care policy should be revised or rescinded. Dr. Robin Hooper and Andy MacGowan reported that the survey results are based on a very small number of students, which prevents drawing definitive conclusions. However, the findings indicated:
  - The majority of parenting students surveyed do not receive child care subsidies from the County, although they are aware of this resource and of the application process.

- Most of these parenting students rely on family members and babysitters for child care, and have a plan for when their child is sick.
- The majority of parenting students surveyed selected larger secondary schools because of the variety of courses offered (versus smaller schools or the Young Mothers program)
- Most of these students are over-age and under-credited, increasing the likelihood that they will not graduate from high school. Since numerous research studies have shown that children whose parents did not graduate from high school are much more likely to struggle in school and not graduate themselves, the cycle of poverty is likely to be perpetuated.

These findings underscore the critical importance of providing support to this vulnerable and fragile population. Committee members decided that the most effective way of supporting these students is to advocate for restoration of County child care subsidies, and for parenting students to be given priority in allocating these subsidies. The plan is to address this through the 3-3-3 consortium with the City and County, and by including County child care subsidies on the Board's Legislative Agenda.

- Additional Revisions to the Education of Homeless Students policy (5110): Elizabeth Reyes, RCSD Liaison for the Families in Transition program, provided recommendations of additional changes needed to this policy. She also obtained input from the NYS McKinney-Vento Coordinator regarding the proposed revisions.

Ms. Reyes reported that the number of homeless students in the District has increased significantly in the last several years, with a total of 2600 students in 2016-17 and 1300 to date for 2017-18. She stated that there have been steady increases of 150-200+ students each year who have become homeless, which is similar to the trends in the Syracuse and Buffalo school districts.

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Thursday, November 9, 2017.

#### **Board Governance Committee**

**Chair Elizabeth Hallmark:** The Board Governance Committee did not meet since the last Business Meeting. No report was submitted.

## **VII. Resolutions**

**2017-18: 300-311:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 7-0.

**2017-18: 312:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

**2017-18: 313:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 5-0 with Commissioner Adams and Commissioner Evans absent.

**2017-18: 314-318:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Hallmark. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 7-0.

**2017-18: 319:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Hallmark. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

**2017-18: 320-334:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Hallmark. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 7-0.

**2017-18: 335-338:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

**2017-18: 339:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Evans. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 5-2 with Vice President Elliott and Commissioner Adams dissenting.

**2017-18: 340:** Motion to adopt was made by Vice President Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 7-0.

**2017-18: 341:** Motion to adopt was made by Vice President Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 7-0.

**2017-18: 342-343:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 7-0.

**2017-18: 344:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

**2017-18: 345:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 7-0.

**2017-18: 346:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 7-0.

**2017-18: 347:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Vice President Elliott. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner Adams dissenting.

**2017-18: 348:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Vice President Elliott. Adopted 6-1 with Vice President Elliott dissenting.

**2017-18: 349-352:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Vice President Elliott. Adopted 7-0.

**Motion to table Resolution No. 2017-18: 353 made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Motion carries 7-0.**

**Motion to table Resolution No. 2017-18: 354 made by Commissioner Adams and seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Motion carries 7-0.**

**2017-18: 355-362:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 7-0.

**2017-18: 363:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Cruz. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner Adams.

**Resolution No. 2017-18: 364 withdrawn from consideration**

**VIII. Unfinished Business:** None.

**IX. New Business:** The following policies were presented as Information Items: Preschool Education Program (4320.5), Field Trips and Excursions policy, and the Student Harassment and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy (0115).

**X. Motion to recess into executive session to discuss matters related to the employment of a specific individual** made by Commissioner Hallmark at 9:55 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Motion carries 7-0.

Commissioner Adams left at 9:55 p.m.

Commissioner Evans left at 9:55 p.m.

**Motion to reconvene** made by Commissioner Cruz at 10:22 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Powell. Motion carries 6-0 with Commissioner Adams absent.

**XI. Motion to adjourn** made by Commissioner Cruz at 10:22 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Powell. Motion carries 6-0 with Commissioner Adams absent