

# ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Business Meeting

July 26, 2018

**Board Members in Attendance:** President Van Henri White, Vice President Willa Powell, Commissioner Cynthia Elliott, Commissioner Melanie Funchess, Commissioner Elizabeth Hallmark, Commissioner Beatriz LeBron, and Commissioner Natalie Sheppard.

**Board Members Excused:** None.

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

President White convened the meeting at 6:35 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 June 11<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting, June 28<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting, July 17<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting and the July 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Meeting made by Commissioner Hallmark, seconded by Vice President Powell. Motion carries 7-0.

**III. Speakers Addressing an Agenda Item:** None.

**IV. Speakers Not Addressing an Agenda Item:** None.

Commissioner LeBron suggested that the agenda be amended to allow the Board to receive the reports of the Parent Advisory Council, the Bilingual Education Council, and the Student Report before speakers addressing the Board and the reports of the Superintendents. President White confirmed that the agenda for future Business Meetings will be revised to allow for the abovementioned order of business, beginning with the August 2018 Business Meeting.

**V. Superintendents Reports:** Dr. Nelms delivered a presentation detailing the enrollment trends and graduation rates of the East schools in comparison to other schools within the District. Dr. Nelms also presented a description of East's special education programming, and related timelines and decisions, as detailed in the approved plan for the EPO. In the presentation it was noted that prior to the EPO, only 4% of students enrolled in 12:1:1 graduated with a Regents diploma. Dr. Nelms stated that the EPO worked to create a program to fully integrate these students with their peers to allow for a greater chance of academic progress. Dr. Nelms concluded the presentation with discussion of the Step to College program aimed at providing high school students with the opportunity to experience rigor of college through academic, social, recreational, and community-related experiences.

Superintendent Deane-Williams discussed recent initiatives, known as Pop-Up Registrations, to engage families and provide direct registration and school selection supports; the District's participation the Public Education Leadership Project; and the annual Executive Leadership and Board retreat.

Deputy Superintendent Elizabeth Mascitt-Miller and EPO Special Assistant Lorna Washington delivered a

presentation on the partnership and collaborative efforts between John James Audubon School No. 33 and the East Lower School. They provide overview of Resolution No. 2017-18: 717 which provided guidance and expectations for the partnership, and discussed that the strengths and opportunities of the effort. In concluding the presentation it was noted that a written recruitment plan for the 2019-2020 school year would be developed and efforts to continuously engage parents would be made throughout the 2018-2019 year.

## **VI. Board Reports:**

### **Audit Committee**

**Chair Beatriz LeBron:** No report submitted.

### **Finance Committee**

**Chair Willa Powell:** The Finance Committee convened on Tuesday, July 24<sup>th</sup> 2018 to review and discuss resolutions. The Committee considered and advances to the full Board with recommendation Resolution Nos. 2018-19: 17 through 19, 49, 50 through 70, 72, 73, 77, and 83 through 85. There were no June financial reports reviewed, as the District is currently closing its books for the 2017-18 fiscal year. The Finance Department will present the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) in September and the Finance Committee looks forward to reviewing a preliminary year-end report in the August meeting.

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

**Chair Natalie Sheppard:** On Tuesday, July 10<sup>th</sup> the Excellence in Student Achievement Committee met to review and discuss 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Academic Progress Reports and preliminary data regarding 2014 cohort graduation rates. The discussion centered on the continued need to improve graduation rates and assist students in making the academic progress needed to graduate. More specifically, Committee members emphasized the need to ensure that student progress is monitored on a timely basis to provide individualized early intervention. To this end, the Committee plans to invite the School Chiefs to report on a regular basis regarding efforts to hold school administrators and staff accountable for timely monitoring of school and student performance and for providing early intervention to different groups of students based on their particular academic needs.

In conjunction with these efforts, Commissioner Sheppard introduced a draft High School to Higher Education Policy for Committee members' review and feedback. The intent of this policy is to ensure that each student has a clear, concrete plan for career and education after high school graduation. The High School to Higher Education Policy directs school staff to provide opportunities and assistance to students in identifying a career path and preparing for the additional education and credentials required to be successful in this pursuit. This approach will require collaboration among District staff, students, parents, and representatives from business, higher education, and the community to enable students to be successful in pursuing their chosen path. The draft policy has been distributed to the Board, and Commissioner Sheppard looks forward to receiving comments and suggestions.

In this month's ESA Committee meeting, an update was provided regarding the District's outreach efforts to historically black colleges and universities (HBCU). Mr. Kennedy reported a number of initiatives to establish relationships with HBCUs, and with the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). The UNCF has networks established with all of the HBCUs and a rich database of prospective teaching candidates of color. Efforts are under way to address a number of barriers to recruiting and hiring these candidates:

- Considering options for offering reciprocity in teaching certification with other states
- Developing an induction/orientation course regarding the challenges of working in an urban

- environment, cultural sensitivity, and responding to the needs of our students
- Examine barriers inherent in the National Teachers' Exam for teaching candidates of color, which leads many to change career fields
- Opportunities for sending RCSD students to HBCU to become teachers and return to the District
- Identifying advantages/incentives for teachers of color to come to RCSD:
  - Loan forgiveness
  - Competitive pay and great benefits
  - Career in Teaching program, offering mentor for a new teacher's first year
  - Housing incentive program offering subsidy toward first-time purchase of a home in the City

The Excellence in Student Achievement Committee plans to receive regular updates regarding the efforts and progress made to enhance the diversity of the District's workforce, particularly among teachers.

Committee members also met Dr. Jason Willis, the new Director of African - African American Studies. Dr. Willis reported on efforts he has made over the last month and his plans for the future, noting three primary needs in the District in terms of cultural relevance:

- An absence of cultural identity among students;
- Lack of awareness of cultural history and heritage among students; and
- The consequent student disengagement, cultural gap between students and teachers, and lack of understanding contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline

Dr. Willis has developed a one-hour professional development session that can be offered on demand, and he has been meeting with core content directors to discuss ways that cultural content can be infused into the curriculum. He discussed using the African - African American department website as a resource for schools and teachers to utilize to enhance the cultural relevance and responsiveness of school and classroom activities for students.

Committee members look forward to Dr. Willis' updates regarding infusing African - African American Studies into the curriculum and addressing the cultural divide between students and teachers. The next meeting of the ESA Committee is scheduled for August 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

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

**Chair Cynthia Elliott:** On Thursday, July 12<sup>th</sup>, the members of the Community & Intergovernmental Relations Committee met to continue discussing the Board Communications Plan and begin planning for a fall community forum.

The CIGR Committee meeting began with members agreeing to collaborate with Chief of Communications, Carlos Garcia, in the development and implementation of the Communications Plan. Chief Garcia will join the Committee in the August meeting and will discuss District plans to increase conversation between the Board and the community. In keeping with this intent, the Committee also discussed plans for a community forum in early October. Several ideas were voiced regarding topics the wider Rochester public needs to be aware of in the upcoming semester. This includes engaging in conversation on the Board's role and responsibilities, appropriate means of communicating with the District, supporting increased student attendance and the efficacy of the Code of Conduct. The fall forum is intended to be a 2-3 hour event, where parents and students will be able to engage with the Board and District staff. Several schools are being considered to host the fall forum, and food and childcare will be provided.

Meeting discussion continued with the Committee considering the hosting of several Commissioners' Nights throughout the 2018-19 academic year. These Commissioners' Nights would be held in established locations, in each of the District's quadrants and offer a standard meeting format so that parents in each area would be able to benefit from similar offerings. The CIGR Committee intends to work closely with Community School principals to establish appropriate dates for these events, to prevent scheduling conflicts with other school events. Conferring with principals will also help to establish which schools should be addressed in each quadrant. The Commissioners' Nights will allow parents to engage in question and answer conversations with Commissioners and is intended to increase community engagement. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for July 12, 2018.

### **Policy Committee**

**Chair Melanie Funchess:** The Policy Committee conducted a Community Forum on Wednesday, June 20, 2018 to gather input from parents and community members about proposed changes to the Visitors to Schools Policy (1240). The Policy Committee plans to request input from principals to obtain school staff's perspective on the changes proposed to the Visitors to Schools Policy. The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for August 9, 2018.

### **Board Governance Committee**

**Chair Elizabeth Hallmark:** The Board held a Special Meeting that convened as a Governance Committee of the Whole met on June 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss evaluation schedules for the superintendent and Board's staff, the proposed 2018-19 Board meeting calendar, topics for the retreat scheduled for July 2018, proposed professional development topics, and receive a presentation on the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). The Committee met as a whole again on July 23<sup>rd</sup> in executive session to discuss the employment of a specific individual. The next meeting of the Committee is not confirmed.

### **President's Report**

**Board President Van Henri White:** President White spoke about recent school visits and his participation at events held throughout the District.

## **VII. Resolutions**

**2018-19: 4-15:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Funchess. Seconded by Vice President Powell. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 17-18:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Funchess. Seconded by Vice President Powell. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting.

**2018-19: 19:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Funchess. Seconded by Vice President Powell. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 20:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner LeBron. Seconded by Vice President Powell. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 21-32:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 33:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner Sheppard dissenting.

**2018-19: 34:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Hallmark. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 43-48:** Motion to adopt was made by Vice President Powell. Seconded by Commissioner Funchess. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner Elliott dissenting.

**2018-19: 49-53:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Hallmark. Seconded by Commissioner Elliott. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 54:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Funchess. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 55:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Funchess. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner LeBron dissenting.

**2018-19: 56:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Funchess. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 57:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Funchess. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner LeBron dissenting.

**2018-19: 58:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Funchess. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner LeBron dissenting.

**2018-19: 59-70:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Elliott. Seconded by Commissioner Funchess. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 71-86:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Hallmark. Seconded by Commissioner Funchess. Adopted 7-0.

**2018-19: 87:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Funchess. Seconded by Vice President Powell. Adopted 6-1 with Commissioner LeBron dissenting.

**VIII. Unfinished Business:** Members of the Board discussed the Board's operational budget allocation for professional development and related travel expenses.

**IX. New Business:** The following policies were presented as Information Items for presentation to the full Board: the Alternative Instruction Policy, the Student Health Services Policy, a revision to the Gifts to District Officers or Employees Policy, the Wandering and Elopement Policy, and a proposed Indemnification Policy.

**Motion to enter into executive session** to discuss matters related to the employment of particular persons and other matters with the General Counsel was made by Commissioner Funchess and seconded by Vice President Powell at 9:35 p.m. Motion carries 7-0.

**Motion to reconvene into open session** made by Commissioner LeBron and seconded by Commissioner Funchess at 11:00 p.m. Motion carries 7-0.

**X. Motion to adjourn** made by Commissioner Elliott at 11:00 p.m. Seconded by Vice President Powell. Motion carries 7-0.