

# ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Business Meeting

August 25, 2011

**Attendance:** President Evans and Commissioners Campos, Powell, White and Williams; Interim Superintendent Bolgen Vargas; Board Clerk Shanai Lee.

President Evans convened the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

- I. Commissioner Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.
- II. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Motion to accept the minutes of the July 28<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting and the August 4<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting made by Commissioner Powell seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 4-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioners Elliott and White absent.

Commissioner White arrived at 6:40 p.m.

III. **Student Recognition:** The Board recognized the Summer 2011 Partnership Program Participants for their contributions of commitment and service during the City School District's summer programming.

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

V. **Superintendent's Report:** Interim Superintendent Dr. Vargas introduced the District's Office of School Chiefs, Dr. Deasure Matthew, Shaun Nelms and Anne Brown Scott, to present the status of school opening activities. The School Chiefs spoke about the Back-to-School Campaign and other efforts employed to ensure that all schools are prepared to open in September. They noted some of the unforeseen needs that the Office has responded to, including new entrants, special education resources, staffing, scheduling and parent communication.

VI. **President's Report:** None.

VII. **Board Reports:**  
**Audit Committee**

*Chair Allen Williams:* The Audit Committee did not meet as a Committee in August. The next committee meeting has not yet been scheduled.

**Finance Committee**

*Chair Willa Powell:* The Finance Committee met on Thursday, August 18<sup>th</sup> to consider Resolutions 156 and 157 for Procurement & Supply; and Resolutions 158 through 161 for Educational Facilities. The Finance Committee also discussed a minor revision to the proposed Fund Balance policy (6500) to change the reference to "Chief Financial Officer" to "Superintendent or their designee". The Committee recommends this amendment to the proposed policy presented to the Board this evening for adoption. Members of the Finance Committee also heard concerns regarding the provision "not to exceed" a specified dollar amount in resolutions for contracts. More specifically, the concerns were that dollar amounts cannot be estimated when the size of the purchase is not yet known (e.g. snowplowing services, number of scientific calculators); establishing this expenditure ceiling impedes the ability to respond to needs as they arise (e.g. roof blown off building); and inclusion of a "not to exceed" clause confuses the

purpose of the contract with expenditure decisions. Expenditures are already governed by the approved budget and can be monitored through the information provided in the monthly financial reports (i.e. comparison of expenditures to date for each category of budget allocation for the current and previous fiscal year). This practice is not governed by Board policy. The practice originated in acquiescence to a single Committee member's request. In light of the concerns presented, the members of the Finance Committee decided to discontinue the practice of providing "not to exceed" thresholds in resolutions. If there is any objection to discontinuing this practice, a policy proposal should be referred to the Policy Committee. The next regular Finance Committee meeting will be held on September 15<sup>th</sup>, immediately following the Policy Committee meeting.

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

*Chair Van Henri White:* The Excellence in Student Achievement Committee met did not meet this month, but will be meeting on Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup> to continue its discussion on Special Education (Specialized Services) with the Department of Teaching and Learning.

### **Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee**

*Chair Cynthia Elliott:* The Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee of the Whole met on August 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss the District's relationship with the City of Rochester; and their intention not to issue further bonds to the District and the financial impact that decision can have on the on the Capital Improvement Program and its relationship with the Facilities Modernization Program and the Maintenance of Effort legislation. Both the Assembly and the Senate introduced bills relating to debt payments for the Rochester City School District facilities. There is concern over the language in both bills. The Assembly bill states "Payment of debt service on any bonds, notes or other obligations issued to finance projects undertaken pursuant to this act shall not be considered debt service payments of the City School District for purposes of subparagraph (II) of paragraph A of subdivision 5-B of section 2576 of the Education Law." But, the Senate bill states "All payments, including lease payments and debt service on any bonds, notes or other obligations issued to finance projects undertaken pursuant to this act shall be considered debt service payments of the City School District for purposes of subparagraph (II) of paragraph A of subdivision 5-B of Section 2576 of the Education Law in a manner consistent with the legislative intent of such section." It seems to be clear in both versions of the bill that the City should not be incur any further debt service. Because of this, the committee determined that a letter would be sent from the Board President to Assemblyman Gantt and to Senator Robach requesting clarification on the differences in their bills and how those differences can be resolved.

The September Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee meeting was scheduled to be held September 13<sup>th</sup>, but that is Primary Day, and two of the members are running primaries; so we are polling the committee for an alternative date at this time.

### **Policy Committee**

*Chair Jose Cruz:* The Policy Committee met on Thursday, August 18th and continued to gather input from the community on a proposed Condom Availability Program. Members of Dream Ministries gave a presentation and provided information about the programs in Thailand, Uganda and the Philippines. Gladys Pedraza Burgos presented data regarding the efficacy of Condom Availability programs in NYC and Chicago. In addition, the members of the Policy Committee reviewed and discussed an amendment proposed to the Internal Audit Reports policy based on the recommendations of the Audit Committee. The Policy Committee decided to advance this version of the policy along with the original for the Board's consideration. The difference between these two policy proposals is that the original requires only the Executive Summary of final audit reports to be posted publicly on the District website, while

the version recommended by the Audit Committee requires the entire final report to be posted. The original proposed policy would provide the entire final report in response to a FOIL request.

Policy Committee members also received information about a new Superintendent regulation, “District Computer Passwords”, which is designed to provide guidelines to strengthen security. The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for September 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. In September the committee plans to address: Parent & Family Engagement policy and regulation; Data regarding Student Placement; Proposed Employee Residency policy; Proposed Amendment to Transportation policy; and Mandates regarding Special Education.

### **Board Governance Committee**

**Chair Melisza Campos:** The Board Governance Committee did not meet in August. The our next Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, September 15th, where we will continue discussion of staff evaluations and upcoming community outreach events – such as the 3rd Annual Community Reach-Out and 2nd Annual State of Our Schools.

**Student Representative Report:** None.

## **VIII. Resolutions**

**2011-12: 133-138:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 139:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 4-1 with Commissioner Williams abstaining Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 140-157:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 158-161:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner Williams. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 162-164:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner White. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 165:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner White. Adopted 4-0 with Commissioner Williams abstaining due to familial relationship and Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 166-169:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner White. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 170:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner White. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 171:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner White. Seconded by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 172-187:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner White. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 188:** Motion to table **Resolution No. 2011-12: 188** made by Commissioner White. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Resolution tabled 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 189:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner White. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 190:** Motion to table **Resolution No. 2011-12: 190** made by Commissioner White. Seconded by Commissioner Campos. Resolution tabled 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**2011-12: 191-200:** Motion to adopt was made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner White. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent.

**IX. Unfinished Business:** None.

**X. New Business:** None.

**XI. Speakers Not Addressing an Agenda Item:** Parent Barry Pugh spoke about the need for increased attendance and truancy efforts. Parents Howard Eagle, Elizabeth Hallmark and Mary Adams spoke against the use of an executive search firm to assist the Board in the superintendent search process. Community members Mary Miskell and Tala Hopkins spoke against the expansion of School No. 28. Community members Wallace Smith, Bonnie Cannan, Tim Adams and Dan Drmacich spoke against the use of an executive search firm to assist the Board in the superintendent search process. Staff member Carl Carpenter spoke in favor of the improvements made in the District's placement processes. Staff member Mark Friedman spoke against the use of an executive search firm to assist the Board in the superintendent search process. Staff members Marisa DeMario and Liz Hanan thanked members of the Board for the recent restoration to the District's music curriculum and programming.

**XII.** President Evans announced that the next Business Meeting of the Board will be held on Thursday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

**XIII.** President Evans requested a **motion to enter into executive session** to discuss personnel matters related to a specific individual. Motion to enter into Executive Session made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner Campos, adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent at 10:10 p.m.

**Motion to enter into open session** made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Commissioner Campos, adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent at 11:00 p.m.

**XIV. Motion to adjourn** made by Commissioner Powell. Seconded by Vice President Cruz. Adopted 5-0 with Vice President Cruz and Commissioner Elliott absent at 11:00 p.m.