



ROCHESTER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
501 West University Drive, Rochester, Michigan

BOARD OF EDUCATION WORK SESSION
May 27, 2014

MINUTES

Call to Order

A Work Session, Open to the Public, of the Board of Education for the Rochester Community Schools, Rochester, Michigan was held on Tuesday, May 27, 2014, at Musson Elementary, 3500 Dutton, Rochester Hills, Michigan 48306. Vice President Chuck Coutteau called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Board members led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moment of Silence:

In honor of Memorial Day

Roll Call

Members Present: Chuck Coutteau, Michael Zabat, Jane Pierobon, Jennifer Berwick, Pat Piskulich, Beth Talbert

Members Absent: Lisa Nowak, with notice

Others Present: Robert Shaner, Debi Fragomeni, Dan Romzek, Beth Davis, Carrie Lawler, Michael Behrmann, Anne Evans, Christine Keener, Christina McWilliams and approximately 14 visitors.

Communications

A. Secretary of the Board of Education

Mr. Zabat shared the following communications received by the Board of Education since the prior meeting: Joshua Raymond shared information from Grand Valley State University regarding the course "Using Technology for Exceptional Students"; Diane Heath regarding the art show at Barnes and Noble; Cory Thomas regarding observing student's classroom; Cathie Kennedy and Sally Rustowicz regarding Field Day.

Mr. Zabat also shared the following comment that he and Mrs. Talbert received at the Board Chat this evening: Joshua Raymond, Shelly and John Wright shared concerns regarding grading.

B. Citizens Requesting Placement on the Agenda – None

C. Members of the Board of Education – None

Work Session

A. Budget

Mr. Romzek, Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, shared the final 2014/2015 general fund budget recommendation. Facts need to be finalized over the next month for the June 23, 2014 Truth in Budget Hearing which are contingent on a legislative gathering this weekend. Administration continues to work through the staffing process with attritions. The House and Senate have passed budgets, but differ from the Governor's proposal; however, nothing has changed since the May 12, 2014 Board of Education presentation, but continues to be a fluid process. There are several meetings over the next month to finalize the school aid act, retirements, contract negotiations, etc. The administration is looking for the Board's feedback to prepare the necessary documents for the Truth in Budget Hearing that will take place on June 23, 2014.

Board comments and discussion included concerns regarding school bus replacements, contingent retirements, and the importance of communicating to the public the millage renewal that is on the August ballot.

B. Student Achievement

Mr. Behrmann, Executive Director for Elementary Education, presented student achievement results from the 2013 Fall MEAP test that was given to students in grades 3-8 across the District and State. District results, trends, comparisons, and gaps were shared in a PowerPoint presentation. The scores reflected cumulative percentages of proficient students in grades 3-8 for reading and math; writing scores were shown for students in grades 4 and 7; science scores reflected students in grades 5 and 8; and social studies were shared for students in 6th grade. Mr. Behrmann also compared Rochester's scores to the 30 most affluent districts with enrollments above 2,000 in the State of Michigan. Achievement gaps, in which sub-groups that are identified by "No Child Left Behind" were presented as well. Mr. Behrmann provided the Board information in terms of how MEAP scores are used by the District insofar as determining areas of instructional strategies, curriculum, and intervention that need to be improved and/or enhanced.

Joshua Raymond, parent, addressed the Board regarding if the suggested improvements are aimed to raise MEAP/Smarter Balance scores or improve education.

Debabrata Sarkar, parent, addressed the Board regarding how the practices of better teachers are disseminated and identifying graphical parameters.

Tom Crowe, parent, addressed the Board regarding the plan for intra district student achievement/school improvement, challenged schools (focus schools), and the plan to reduce the gap in these schools.

Joshua Raymond, parent, addressed the Board regarding the Smarter Balance exposing the excellence gap and addressing these gaps with demographics.

C. Grading Committee Update

Mrs. Lawler, Executive Director for Secondary Education, introduced the Grading Committee members present at the meeting this evening which included Kevin Cummings, Amy Grande, Jennifer Wilson, Michael Bennion, Casey Wescott and Sandy Turner. Mrs. Lawler presented the short and long term goals on grading scale and weighted grades. Currently there is not a Board Policy in regards to a grading scale; it is only in the staff handbook. The Class of 2014 was the first class that implemented the new academic recognition program. Mrs. Lawler shared the impact of the grading scale on college acceptance, scholarships, and overall GPA. Having a grading scale will keep a consistent scale for each letter grade. The consensus of the committee is to recommend the establishment of a district Grading Scale so that an "A" range starts at 93%. It is the intent of the Grading Committee to develop a regulation under the current Board Policy 5422 on Grading.

Board comments and discussion included if parents were on the committee, the possibility of adding percentages on transcripts, GPA calculations being done by college admissions and letter grades.

Debabrata Sarkar, parent, addressed the Board regarding having a student on the committee, weighted AP classes vs. regular courses being different and the universities' interpretation.

Shelley Wright, parent, addressed the Board regarding phasing in or retro activating the grading scales and weighting.

Michelle Bueltel, parent, addressed the Board regarding having the new grading scale implemented right away.

Joshua Raymond, parent, shared stats from universities in regards to weighted grades.

Kevin Cummings, Principal of Adams High School, shared that the percentage reflects effort, but a 90 and a 93 are the same letter grade on a 4.0 scale.

Debabrata Sarkar, parent, addressed the Board regarding the weighted grade model and the correct balance between ACT (overall) and the grades (overall for school).

The recommendation will be brought to the Board of Education at their regular meeting on June 9, 2014.

D. Technology Update

Mrs. Fragomeni, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, shared recommendations from the Plante Moran study that focused on the district's technology infrastructure. July 1, 2014 will begin the merger of technology and instruction in our schools.

Board comments and discussion included the standardization of technology in each of our schools.

Tom Crowe, parent, addressed the Board regarding the Plante Moran survey and the socio-economic diversity in our schools.

Additional Information

A. Citizens Present at the Meeting – None

B. Members of the Administration

Dr. Shaner thanked the Board members for all of their support this past week. Mrs. Fragomeni invited the Board to visit Meadowbrook Elementary tomorrow, May 28, 2014, for a picnic and for an afternoon of visiting the kindergarten classes along with Dr. Mel Blohm and Mrs. Deb Walter.

C. Members of the Board of Education

Ms. Berwick reminded everyone of the mulch fundraiser through the RCS Foundation. Mr. Piskulich attended the ACE graduation and shared the heartfelt appreciation of a parent for the ACE program. Mr. Piskulich also announced that Michelle Bueltel will be stepping down from the PTA Council and thanked her for all her work.

Announcements

A. Upcoming Events

- May 28 7:00 P.M., Honors Convocation, Rochester HS
- May 29 7:00 P.M., IA Graduation, Detroit Opera House
- June 3 7:00 P.M., Rochester HS Graduation, Ultimate Soccer Arena
- June 4 7:00 P.M., Adams HS Graduation, Ultimate Soccer Arena
- June 5 7:00 P.M., Stoney Creek HS Graduation, Ultimate Soccer Arena
- June 9 7:00 P.M., Board of Education, Regular Mtg., Admin. Ctr.
- June 10 7:00 P.M., RACE Graduation, Rochester HS Auditorium
- June 12 Last Day for Gr. K-5
- June 13 Last Day for Gr. 6-11 & Post High
- June 23 6:45 P.M., Board of Education, Truth in Budget Hearing, Admin. Ctr.
- June 23 7:00 P.M., Board of Education, Regular & Organizational Mtg., Admin. Ctr.
- June 24 Grades posted to MyRCS

Adjournment

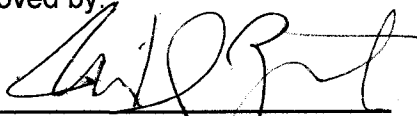
A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 10:04 p.m.

Moved by: Mrs. Talbert
Supported by: Mrs. Berwick
Vote: 6-0

Respectfully submitted:

Christina McWilliams
Recording Secretary

Approved by:


Secretary, Board of Education