

MINUTES OF THE **OPEN SESSION OF A SPECIAL MEETING** OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 205, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, HELD ON **WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2010**, IN THE DISTRICT OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM, SOUTH HOLLAND, ILLINOIS, BEGINNING AT 4:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by the President for the purpose of presenting the Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding for approval.

PURPOSE OF MEETING

A copy of the meeting and certification by the Secretary are a part of the official minutes.

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m. On roll call, Members Banks, King, Lawrence and Penman answered. Members Burton, Williams and Ware were absent. Dr. J. Kamala Buckner, Superintendent; Mr. Tim Truesdale, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and External Funding; Dr. Betheny Lyke, Thornton Principal; Mrs. Darcelle Williams, Thornwood Principal, and Ms. Kim Waller, Thornridge Principal, were also present.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Burton moved, Mrs. Lawrence seconded, to **Approve the Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding** with the following caveat: If funds are not received from the State, if the District does not submit a plan within ninety (90) days, the District will not be held liable and can pull out at any time; the union will not give up any of their contractual rights under the Labor Relations Board. The purpose of the agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State of Illinois in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top grant project. Mr. Truesdale provided the following overview:

APPROVAL OF RACE TO THE TOP MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

- Participating districts must sign the Race to the Top Memorandum of Understanding by January 11, 2010.
- Additional funding is available for the underperforming schools that fall within the bottom 5% of student achievement statewide. District 205 is in the bottom 5%.
- Illinois will not receive funding without substantial legislation changes.

At 4:16 p.m., Mr. Burton joined the meeting.

MR. BURTON JOINED MEETING

At 4:22 p.m., Mr. Williams joined the meeting.

MR. WILLIAMS JOINED MEETING

- Illinois needs demonstration of support from districts and teachers associations in order to compete for the grant.
- The four fundamental areas of reform that Race to the Top seeks to address are: 1) standards and assessment; 2) building data systems to support instruction; 3) quality or effective teachers and principals, and 4) turning around the lowest achieving schools.
- Illinois could receive up to \$500 million; half of which would go to districts and half to support state-wide reform initiatives.

APPROVAL OF RACE TO THE TOP MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, Con't.

District 205 has some of the reform issues already in place. Changes could require an increase in the number of classes offered, which would include the number of teachers required.

The District needs to strengthen the academic integration within the programs of study, i.e., explicit connections are needed in the Pre-engineering program with math to help students improve math achievement.

The Board was concerned how Race to the Top allows the high schools and middle schools to communicate. There is an expectation that middle schools will align their curriculum with high schools. Districts need to have access to data for the Pre-K through 8 students. This is a significant issue. The State will make recommendations for a state data management system; participating districts will share data as part of the project.

District 205 is anxious to work with feeder schools to create the environment of a K-12 district. This is not a district-wide grant and priority schools are targeted. If awarded, it is anticipated that the priority school would be Thornton since its low income level is the lowest of District 205 schools at 81%. The other two buildings would not have access to the funds. Whatever would prove successful at Thornton would be replicated at the other schools.

APPROVAL OF
RACE TO THE TOP
MEMORANDUM OF
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Con't.

The Faculty Association is concerned regarding the evaluation system for teachers. Their collective bargaining agreement cannot be superseded and all aspects must be agreed upon.

The lead partners who are external educational organizations must submit applications to the State also, and will have significant input for the roles of the schools.

Race to the Top is a \$4.3 billion grant from the Department of Education set aside through federal legislation. All states can apply for the funding. The application is due January 11, with notification in March. If not awarded the funds in round one, the State will get feedback to strengthen the application for the second round, which is due in June, with notification in late July.

By signing the Memorandum of Understanding, the Board, Superintendent and Faculty Association indicate their interest in participating in Race to the Top. If the State's application is not funded, the Memorandum of Understanding is null and void.

A discussion took place about charter schools, the Board's authority, and the advantages of signing the Memorandum of Understanding. Mr. Burton commented that the services of lead partners are not needed and is not money well spent.

On roll call, Members Banks, Burton, King, Lawrence, Penman and Williams voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

At 5:16 p.m., Mr. Burton moved, Mrs. Lawrence seconded, to **Adjourn the Meeting**. On roll call, Members Banks, Burton, King, Lawrence, Penman and Williams voted aye; nay, none; motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT

President

Secretary

rp(spec brd mins 1-6-10)
OPEN SESSION