

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
(Official)

August 18, 2010  
Elizabeth, New Jersey

A special meeting of the Board of Education was called on August 18, 2010 at 5:30 p.m., in the Multi Purpose Room, Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education, 544 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Carlos Trujillo presented the following statement at 6:18 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a special meeting of the Board of Education. Pursuant to New Jersey Statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this meeting was sent to The Star Ledger, The Home News Tribune, and Cablevision of Elizabeth on Thursday, August 12, 2010. In addition, this notice is posted on the Bulletin Board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth.”

“I wish to extend a warm welcome to everyone present to this August 18, 2010 meeting of the Board of Education. We are here to govern, provide management oversight, and make policy for the district. The Superintendent manages the district. This is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.”

“This meeting is being recorded and will become part of the Elizabeth Board of Education permanent record. In order that the recording will adequately reflect the proceedings, please refrain from talking while others are speaking. I also ask that you silence the sound on your electronic devices. Since it is legally mandated that these proceedings be accurately recorded, I may have to ask for order periodically should noise begin to interfere with our recording capabilities. I am pleased that you have taken time this evening to join us. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools.”

“There will be a public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must sign in one hour prior to the advertised start of the meeting so that they may have the opportunity to speak. The sign-in sheet states the name, address, telephone number and reason that the person wants to comment, whether it is an agenda item or a general education comment.”

Present: Pastor Burgos, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso (arr.6:45 p.m.), González, Perreira, Trujillo – 6

Absent: Mr. DaSilva, Mrs. Munn, Mr. Nazco – 3

Superintendent of Schools Pablo Muñoz, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Board Attorney Kirk Nelson, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Aida Garcia, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Olga Hugelmeyer, Executive Director of Human Resources/Labor Attorney Karen Murray, Assistant Board Secretary Donald Gonçalves, and Comptroller William Greene were in attendance. There were no members of the public in attendance.

Mr. González gave the invocation.  
Pledge of Allegiance  
Pledge of Ethics  
Core Beliefs and Commitments

Mr. Trujillo presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphones based on the order of the sign-in. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to sixty minutes. No individual is able to yield their time to another individual. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members individually. The following rules for public participants shall apply: time limits will be strictly enforced, no personal attacks on individuals, no vulgar or indecent language, a person may address the Board no more than once during a single meeting, speakers should refrain from naming individuals, and comments or questions posed during public participation will not be debated. As a reminder, this is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.”

Since there were no citizens to address the Board, Mr. Trujillo declared this portion of the public meeting closed.

Mr. Trujillo introduced Julian Trevino, Senior Consultant, Center for Reform of School Systems, who facilitated a board training program under the Fourth Cohort of Reform Governance in Action<sup>®</sup> sponsored by the Center for Reform of School Systems.

Mr. Trevino stated that the district and CRSS have been working together for more than two years and that this is the last of the ten on-site sessions. Mr. Trevino stated that the agenda of this session includes a review, final exam, questionnaire and feedback, and the Sustainability Institute. Mr. Trevino led a discussion with the administrators and Board members on the meaning of legacy and what does it mean for each person as an individual. The Board members responded how an individual would like to be remembered, what we accomplished so far to pass on to the next generation, to build something that would last so the next generation can continue the achievements, and looking back in ten years to see what we did for the children to be successful, such as having pre-kindergarten classes for every three and four year old child in the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Trevino stated that it is more important what you do with your theories of action and improving the educational circumstances of the children and that is difficult work. Mr. Trevino stated that it is far more important than constructing a building of brick and mortar.

Mr. Trevino stated that in the last two years this Board has done a tremendous job with their deliverables and that becomes the problem because the only way you can go is down, that it is a fact that other districts that have gone before you doing wonderful work and then they had a change in membership with dynamics and culture change and that the only thing certain is transition. Mr. Trevino stated that as good as a Board as this is with good administrators the fact is that you will not be here forever. Mr. Trevino stated that this Board is basically a new Board, that the dynamics have changed and this Board has a choice of what kind of legacy to build and leave. Mr. Trevino stated that when the Board does not maintain the consistency of moving forward and doesn't honor the theory of action and the theories that were written without looking at where they have gone, then it becomes a wasted two years and the legacy is gone. Mr. Trevino commented that sometimes the defense mechanism comes up and says no one is looking and no one knows but a Board can not bury its head in the sand. Mr. Trevino stated that the CRSS staff sees this happen to Boards across the country that have gone through changes. Mr. Trevino stated that this Board has to continue the momentum that it started and to look at the test scores and what you have accomplished. Mr. Trevino stated that this Board has done tremendous things in the last two years.

Superintendent Pablo Muñoz stated that the comments about legacy by the Board members were right on the mark. Mr. Muñoz commented that the guideposts for legacy include the 3L's as a guiding theme for the organization, creating a loving, caring school district for our students, staff and community, having a laser-like focus on teaching and learning because that is our core business and leveraging leadership on the Board and schools as a mechanism to rise and that we also talk about the fourth L, legacy, which is what you leave behind. Mr. Muñoz stated

that legacy has some of these characteristics including starting in 2005 with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as a figure to remind us of his legacy and why we exist, that people like Jesus, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Theresa, Abraham Lincoln, Ghandi, and Rosa Parks sacrificed tremendously in their efforts and many gave the ultimate sacrifice. Mr. Muñoz stated that the common theme for their legacy is sacrifice in their personal life and professional life, so much sacrifice that they put others before themselves, and that legacy has a lot to do with sacrifice and putting others before yourself. Mr. Muñoz commented that he had an interesting conversation with a Board member about two years ago when he told about a conversation he had with a local mayor, that the conversation was about legacy, that the mayor may be in power now but we will win in the long run because you have power to control power and control but we use our time to educate the youth and lay seeds in the children to educate them, to blossom, to build leaders, and to build kids, that our agenda may take longer but by the time we build the masses to an education system and religious system that we will leave a longer legacy, that the mayor may be mayor for 30 years but people will eventually forget him, and they may not remember us either but the fruits of our labor will blossom in the community to the education we give our children and the religious training that the local community gives our children. Superintendent Muñoz stated that in the long run legacy has to do with what we are able to do as a team with the selection of people, the training of people, the building of systems and organizational operations that sustain and move the organization forward years after we are gone, that we build such a strong culture around high student achievement and excellence that the next administrators, teaching staff and Board members fall into the Elizabeth Way of academic excellence and won't tolerate anything less than that. Mr. Muñoz stated that an element of our legacy has always been the partnership between the Board, the Superintendent's administrative team and the Elizabeth Education Association and that moving forward there is even hope that the Principal and Supervisor union will also join that partnership. Mr. Muñoz stated that legacy is that long after you are gone the good work that you did helped create children that were able to go on to college, get an education, find a high paying job and begin the cycle of nurturing the next generation of children.

Mr. Trevino thanked Mr. Muñoz for an excellent definition of legacy.

Mr. Trevino reviewed the work of the last two years including developing and adopting a highly effective system of Board meetings and committees to enable the Board to focus more on reform leadership and student achievement. Mr. Trevino stated that is the first question of the final exam and led a discussion with the Board members and administrators on the outcome. The Board members responded that the number of standing committees was decreased from thirteen committees to four, that the four committees now include educational management, legal, finance and properties, the reading of the statement that this is a meeting of the Board in public and not a meeting of the public and that the public session of the Board meeting was restructured for citizens wishing to speak.

Mr. Trevino stated that the goal of the constituent service was to develop, adopt and implement a highly effective system with clearly defined protocols to show how the constituent service complaints will be resolved and led a discussion with the Board members and administrators on the outcome. The Board members responded that Assistant Superintendent Jerome Dunn keeps track of the constituent service complaints and the Board members receive quarterly reports on the issues and resolutions. Mr. Trevino stated that this is to make the system do what it should, that when parents call in with complaints and concerns to make sure they get a response as fast as possible and make sure they get their questions answered.

Mr. Trevino stated that the goal of the management oversight workshop was to develop, adopt and implement an effective management oversight system to ensure the integrity and performance of major business systems. Mr. Trevino led a discussion with the Board members and administrators on the outcome including the workshops held on human resources, theory of action managed instruction, transportation and two finance workshops. Mr. Muñoz stated that we have done five management oversight workshops so far, that technology is scheduled for the end of September and managed instruction with a focus on early childhood is scheduled for the fourth quarter. Mr. Trevino stated that this Board sent the video of the first management oversight workshop on finance to CRSS and other districts have used your video to develop their own

management oversight workshops. Mr. Trevino requested copies of the other management oversight workshops to be sent to CRSS.

Mr. Trevino stated that the work on the Core Beliefs and Commitments was excellent and that the key statement is to provide vision and direction and must be communicated effectively to everyone. Mr. Trevino stated that there is no other school district that he works with that communicates the Core Beliefs and Commitments as well as the Elizabeth Public Schools.

Mr. Trevino stated that the theory of action is what makes a difference for the students and what distinguishes this Board from any other Board around here. Mr. Trevino stated that CRSS has a consultant working with Newark and they are making an attempt at this. Mr. Trevino stated that the goal was to develop and adopt a clear and explicit theory of action to drive rapid and significant improvement in student achievement. Mr. Trevino led a discussion with Board members and administrators on the result of the theory of action including managed instruction, possible performance variation in the future, clarity about the theory with district-wide curriculum, making sure a student going from one school to another in the district will have the same material and level of instruction and that the result should be increase in student achievement. Mr. Muñoz stated that the work on the theory of action began in 2008 and the policy was re-adopted in 2009. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Board adopted it first in 2006 but it was the Superintendent's theory of action from his work with the Broad Foundation, and that the Board now owns this theory of action from their work with RGA and CRSS, that they read the different theories of action, reaffirmed the theory of action and modified the theory of action by adding an element of accountability that was not there before. Mr. Muñoz stated that the work on the theory of action led to the Board working on a reform policy, developing and adopting a policy on accountability. Mr. Muñoz stated that the big difference was the shift of ownership from the Superintendent owning the theory of action to now the Board owning the theory of action and the Board understood the importance of the policy. Mr. Muñoz stated that we have seen gains academically over time and will show them again, that the test scores sometimes get fuzzy understanding if there are gains because the State over the last two years has changed the way they declare proficiency, and that across the State there was a shift in test scores, that in certain grades there seemed to be a drop but we rebounded the following year. Mr. Muñoz stated that we are seeing progress but certainly not enough and that this also helps us guide us to our larger goal of Reaching 90% across the district. Mr. Muñoz stated that the larger goal of Reaching 90% which is the strongest indicator toward our vision to become one of the best school systems in the State of New Jersey. Mr. Muñoz stated that this theory of action clearly states that not only does the curriculum need to be aligned but the people hired to teach it need to be great, we need to train them, we need to have effective leaders, we need to look at data, we need an accountability element of the theory of action. Mr. Muñoz stated that a lot of the work is at the school level so that it does not always get seen at the Board level. Mr. Muñoz stated that the Board gets to see the ancillary policies, that from the work on the Core Beliefs and Commitments and theory of action this training has guided the Board into developing three reform policies that were clearly tied back to the theory of action.

Mr. Trevino asked how much is the State of New Jersey changing annually the performance metrics and accountability measures.

Mr. Muñoz stated that there are two changes, that one was driven by No Child Left Behind, that the proficiency benchmark for each span of tests every three years was pushed higher heading up to 100% in 2014. Mr. Muñoz stated that the State of New Jersey decided to use three year intervals which affected AYP. Mr. Muñoz stated that the biggest change over the last two years and possibly this year is that they changed the standards on the test for grades 5-8 to determine if a student was proficient in all but one area, eighth-grade math, the bar was raised so that the results of the number of students proficient across the State dropped. Mr. Muñoz stated that this past year the State changed the standards for grades 3 and 4, that we were almost at 80% for grades 3 and 4 but the standards were recalibrated and across the State the number of students proficient dropped.

Mr. Trevino asked in the policy development work in addition to the theory of action what other policies have been developed as a result. The Board members responded that the high

school graduation requirements policy, accountability, and grading were the three reform policies. Mr. Muñoz stated that in addition to the three reform policies the Board, as a result of the State monitoring system, reviewed and adopted 425 policies, regulations and bylaws to bring their governance manual up to date and 88 were repealed. Mr. Muñoz stated that the whole governance manual is now up to date. Mr. Trevino stated that most Boards will only do the operational policies to abide by the law. Mr. Trevino stated that less than 1% of Boards across the country, excluding RGA Boards, will do reform policies about student achievement.

Mr. Trevino led the Board members and administrators in a discussion of the data dashboard including using it as a snapshot of the district's health, looking at student performance, exactly where we are at a certain time and that there are 28 indicators on the dashboard.

Mr. Trevino stated the purpose of the data dashboard is to align it with the superintendent's evaluation and that a lot of work was done on the superintendent's evaluation. Mr. Trevino commented that when he was a Board member the superintendent's evaluation had questions such as how the superintendent gets along with staff and does he dress well and he asked what does that have to do with how the students are learning. Mr. Trevino led the Board members and administrators in a discussion of the superintendent's evaluation and where we are at this point. Mr. Muñoz stated that from the last visit by Mr. Trevino, the Board members reviewed the deliverables that were expected of them as well as spending some time looking at model policies and exhibits from across the United States, that Mr. Trevino took them through a review of all the policies and asked them what they liked and didn't like in the different policies that they read using a rubric to grade the different policies. Mr. Muñoz stated that he made some notes on what the Board members liked and disliked and read what was in place and made some edits to the policy and the evaluation exhibit and created an appendix to the evaluation which is the data dashboard that goes with the evaluation. Mr. Muñoz explained the changes to the policy and the evaluation and that the appendix is a data dashboard indicators report is a completely new piece. Mr. Muñoz stated that during the committee review there was a healthy discussion of edits and additions to the policy and that the two exhibits were acceptable to the committee. Mr. Muñoz stated that the policy and exhibits presented tonight are what the committee had moved forward to this level of the Board. Mr. Muñoz explained that if the Board as a whole likes the policy and exhibits, then the first reading would be tomorrow night at the regularly scheduled Board meeting and second reading and adoption at the September meeting, and then it will be used in 2011 for the first time. Mr. Muñoz stated that after the policy is approved then it will be sent to CRSS as the final deliverable and that the other reform policies have been sent to CRSS. Mr. Trevino asked about customer satisfaction on Appendix A, page 2, number 28 and how that is measured. Mr. Muñoz stated that at this time customer satisfaction is not measured and that we have to come up with an instrument to measure it, and most likely it will be a survey product and we will have to determine the frequency, and that a vision for it will be surveying a satisfaction of our customers at the school level and also consider that people interact with other operational pieces. Mr. Trevino asked if that was also in the superintendent's evaluation. Mr. Muñoz stated that it is one of the indicators but there is no data at this time to populate the boxes and at this time it is only one of the indicators. Mr. Trevino stated that would be very difficult to put in the superintendent evaluation and that his advice is that it really needs to be clarified as to what do you really mean by satisfied with the school their child attends, are they satisfied with the cafeteria, are they satisfied with the teacher, and when the sample occurs is important because it may be on the day that their child was disciplined, is the survey on the first day of school, two weeks into the school year or at the end of the school year. Mr. Trevino commented that there are so many caveats with this question that it needs further review and clarification. Mr. Trevino stated that the data dashboard is tied into the superintendent evaluation and gives you a picture of the district.

Mr. Trevino stated that for new Board members across the country there will be an orientation of the RGA in Denver, November 4-6, 2010. Mr. Muñoz explained to the two new Board members, John Donoso and Paul Perreira, that the Board will make arrangements for them to attend if they would like to participate, that it is powerful, intense training that will bring them up to speed on the RGA program.

Mr. Trevino stated that the last piece is the questionnaire and feedback for the Broad Foundation and instructed the Board members and administrators to complete the forms that will be collected. Mr. Trevino thanked the Board members and administrators for the due diligence in completing this document.

Mr. Trevino stated that Eli Broad is no longer funding RGA work like this; however CRSS is continuing to train, that the Priddy Foundation in Texas is funding school systems for the training, that CRSS is also working with the Meadows Foundation, and that CRSS also has the Sustainability Institute. Mr. Trevino stated that CRSS can't improve without evaluating themselves and that they take their work very seriously. Mr. Trevino stated that we receive calls to work with school systems and Boards but that CRSS doesn't work with all school systems, that they do their homework first and that CRSS has a reputation to protect, that if they think a school system is not going to perform and not implement the deliverables then CRSS will decline to work with them.

Mr. Trevino asked what aspects of RGA were the most beneficial to the Board-Superintendent team. The administrators responded that the examination and refinement of the systems and in-depth look into the system with regard to improving student achievement, the case studies were very fruitful for the Board members to see what other districts deal with who are worse off or dealing with the same problems, and that the case studies were powerful depending on what targeted lessons they were teaching around the reform policies. The Board members responded that RGA really brought professionalism to our Board, that it gave us the tools to have a deeper understanding of what Board work is about, defined the relationship with the Superintendent, gave us a road map, held us accountable to be a successful, cohesive Board, professional development commitment, helped us to focus on student achievement and understanding the achievement gap and showed us how to govern through policy.

Mr. Trevino asked what aspects of RGA were the least beneficial to the Board-Superintendent team. The administrators responded that smaller group teams to focus on one area to accomplish the deliverables was good but that we missed what the other groups were doing, that one area of concern in the two-year training is the very nature of change and bringing new Board members up to speed. The Board members responded that they were disappointed that this district is not eligible for the Broad Prize because of the size of the district.

Mr. Trevino asked if the work has led or will lead to significant and lasting gains in student achievement. The administrators and Board members responded that this in-depth training and work in developing reform policies will lead to significant and lasting gains.

Mr. Trevino asked if there were any recommendations for modifying or improving RGA. The administrators responded that CRSS would be a good repository for materials for districts in the training process, that it would be good to add the instructional components, that a civic component for capacity building for Board members to be re-elected, governance team understanding, and that the four off-site visits allowed positive interaction, team building and relationship building. The Board members responded that the discussion at the first induction emphasized the Board's responsibilities and Board members not crossing the line and that it would be good to make that an on-going discussion throughout the two year training.

Mr. Trevino explained the Sustainability Institute and the goal to support the district's reform momentum established during RGA with additional services and continuing to review and further the use of the reform tools developed during RGA and developing additional reform tools where applicable. Mr. Trevino explained the program components including engaging CRSS for on-site training to help further the reform efforts that have been initiated under RGA to ensure continuous gains in student achievement, developing new reform policies aligned with the district's theory of action and that the trainer can troubleshoot, problem solve and provide feedback on the district's reform momentum, that new district team members learn the fundamentals of RGA, training opportunities on good governance, team building and collaboration, sustaining reform momentum with performance monitoring, forward planning and continuous learning. Mr. Trevino explained the cost which covers training materials and case studies and that there would be two sessions per year one before school begins and the other in the spring. Mr. Trevino stated that the sustainability program requires a strong commitment from all parties to continue breaking new ground that will make lasting contributions to student

achievement and overall district performance and that CRSS is dedicated to working with the nation's school systems to ensure sustained, effective reform efforts.

Mr. Trevino commented that this Board has made great strides and needs to continue, that the Board cannot become static, and that it is the legacy of this Board. Mr. Trevino explained that the first session can include detailed curriculum and the Board's self-evaluation.

Mr. Muñoz stated that a contract for the Sustainability Institute can be presented to the Board for vote and that this is ultimately the Board's decision. Mr. Muñoz explained that the Superintendent's evaluation needs to be completed before April 1 and asked the Board if they would like to participate in the Sustainability Institute.

Mr. Kennedy explained the requirements of NJQSAC to conduct a Board self-evaluation and Superintendent's evaluation. Mr. Kennedy stated that in the past it was monitored by our Board Attorney and that it would be a more focused approach to have someone who has been training the administrators and Board members for the last two years.

Mr. Trevino stated that over the last two years there has been professional growth of the Board members who now speak a certain language and represent the Elizabeth Public Schools, constituents, and themselves in a professional manner. Mr. Trevino commented that the Board members are the most visible of all the politicians because the constituents see them and know their families. Mr. Trevino stated that leadership matters and thanked the Board members for their dedication and hard work to make him look good as a trainer.

Mr. Trujillo thanked Mr. Trevino for the wonderful training and stated that he sincerely believes that the training paid by Mr. Broad is making a difference in the City of Elizabeth, that the focus is on student achievement, that we are on our way to becoming one of the best districts in the State of New Jersey, that the credit goes to the staff but that a good Board is also needed and thanked Julian for the work he has done with the Board and administrators.

On a motion by Pastor Burgos, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, the meeting was adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Pastor Burgos, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Donoso, González, Perreira, Trujillo – 6

Negative: None

Harold E. Kennedy, Jr.  
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary