

Board Governance Committee

June 19, 2007

6:30 p.m.

Conference Room 3A

MINUTES

Attendance:

Chairwoman Elliott, Commissioners White (arrived 6:40 p.m.), Powell, Brennan and Thompson; President Garcia; Board Staff L. Dunsmoor.

Chairwoman Elliott convened the meeting at 6:31 p.m. and noted that the sole agenda item was a discussion of the role of the Board President. All commissioners had been invited to the meeting. Vice President Evans was out of town.

Discussion:

Chairwoman Elliott said the meeting was called in light of some concerns that meetings were being conducted by the board leadership that the rest of the board was unaware. All commissioners should be apprised of information from meetings the leadership conducts with the superintendent and elected officials. The meeting was being held in the spirit of continuous improvement.

Commissioner Powell noted that the leadership's weekly meetings with the Superintendent, at one point, would rotate the addition of one commissioner, but it was a hit or miss pattern.

President Garcia said Vice President Evans may meet with other elected officials from time to time, but it is in his capacity as chair of Community and Intergovernmental Relations. If the president is involved, it is strictly to discuss items already discussed or approved by the Board, e.g. the Mapledale school and the Ryan Center.

Commissioner White asked for clarification regarding the weekly meetings with the Superintendent. He noted that the Board's Bylaws call for the Board to assign commissioners to the weekly meeting with the Superintendent, not the President. President Garcia said the purpose of the weekly meetings is to set the agenda for the monthly business meeting. Commissioner White also said that commissioners should have been informed that President Garcia would be present during the recent meetings with Mayor Duffy. President Garcia said he had not planned to attend all of the meetings but considered that the wisest course of action when he saw that the Mayor had one of his staff members in attendance. There was no time to inform commissioners before the meetings began.

Commissioner Thompson said that when she was President, the Business Meetings were rarely the topic of discussion and that she also provided regular updates on the meetings to the other commissioners. Every president has handled this role issue differently.

Commissioner White also noted that the Board staff, according to the defined roles of the committees, is supervised and evaluated by Board Governance.

DRAFT; NOT APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

President Garcia elaborated that his role as president requires him to facilitate a balanced discussion at the dais. When discussion strays off topic, he will call it out of order. It may be appropriate to bring the item up under New Business, which any commissioner can do at that time.

Commissioner Brennan said that Robert's Rules of Order provides for motions to vacate the chair, or remove the president. President Garcia said Robert's Rules apply only after NYS law and the Board's own bylaws. NYS case law indicates that the Board President can only be removed by the Commissioner of Education unless the President is also being removed from the Board for cause.

Chairwoman Elliott summarized the meeting outcomes:

- At the dais, Commissioners will keep discussion to items on the table and will use the "point of privilege" protocol to make statements.
- The Board Leadership will keep the other commissioners apprised of meetings with elected officials regarding Board business.
- The Board Orientation Manual for new members needs to be updated.

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner White. Adopted 3-0 at 8 p.m.