

Rochester Board of Education

Finance Committee

October 11, 2005 at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Commissioners Powell, Evans, and Garcia, Ms. Rohring, Mr. Connors, Ms. Tripi, Dr. Cliby, Mr. Greene, Ms. Fine,

Commissioner Powell convened the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

I. Receive and Review Monthly Financial Reports

Commissioner Powell asked if everyone had an opportunity to look over the monthly financial reports and whether anyone had any questions.

Motion to accept the monthly financial reports by Commissioner Garcia. Seconded by Commissioner Powell. Adopted 2-0 with Commissioner Evans absent.

Commissioner Evans arrived at 5:42 p.m.

Commissioner Evans had a concern regarding the language used on the Reconciliation of Cash versus Accrued Expense (Total uses of cash 2005-2006) report. On the last notes page (letter H), the NY Teacher's Retirement System is referred to as the NY Teacher's Retirement Incentive. Has the District participated in an incentive program recently or is it a misprint and should state NYS Teachers' Retirement System? Ms. Tripi stated it should read NY Teacher's Retirement System.

Commissioner Powell asked that the pages be corrected before they are presented to the Board.

ACTION: Provide amended financial reports before October 14th.

II. Receive and Review Proposed Resolutions for October 2005 Board Business Meeting

Resolutions were not prepared prior to the meeting and Commissioner Powell wanted to know if they absolutely had to be included in this month's packet to the Board, which requires previous committee approval.

Commissioner Garcia wanted to know, due to the level of importance, why weren't the resolutions prepared on time?

Ms. Tripi apologized for the delay. She informed the committee that she would be meeting with Mr. Greene and Ms. Cottrell to develop a preparation process for the Finance Committee Meetings, which will include a discussion regarding preparation of resolutions and timelines surrounding submission.

a. Benchmark Assessment Resolution

Resolution will be presented in November. Commissioner Powell stated that the presentation format is a work in progress and it is very close to what she is looking for. Not quite there, but getting closer and closer everyday. She also noted that the committee is awaiting financial information on this proposal as well, not only annual licensing fees, total implementation costs.

ACTION: Prepare resolution and cost information.

b. IKC

Commissioner Powell asked if there were any questions. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to recommend to the Board.

Motion made by Commissioner Garcia, Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 3-0.

c. CELT

Commissioner Powell noted that there are two resolutions for this company.

Commissioner Evans asked whether this would be e-rate eligible.

Mr. Greene noted that the VoIP would be eligible in the 2006-07 fiscal year, but the project management component would not.

Motion to recommend to the Board made by Commissioner Garcia, Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 3-0.

d. Instructional Technology

Commissioner Powell asked if Scientific Learning (Fast ForWord) and Ableware were ongoing initiatives?

Dr. Cliby indicated that all three programs (Scientific Learning, Achieve 3000 and Ableware) are paid from categorical dollars which qualifies them for reimbursement.

i. Scientific Learning (Fast ForWord)

Commissioner Powell stated she is very encouraged with the program and has been very excited about its implementation for many years. She wanted to know how many schools were being targeted.

Dr. Cliby stated five additional schools and two to be converted from yearly licensing to perpetual licensing.

Commissioner Powell asked what was the sum compared to last year.

Dr. Cliby stated last year was \$290k and this year is \$330k.

Commissioner Powell asked if this was incremental cost.

Dr. Cliby stated it was and that the cost was in line with the past.

Commissioner Garcia wanted to know why we were proposing to expand the project. He asked for information on how successful the program has been.

Commissioner Evans concurred with the request, need justification for expansion of the program.

Dr. Cliby stated an analysis had been completed, and that the supporting data was available if the committee would like to see it.

Commissioner Garcia stated he would like to see what the data indicates before passing resolution to the Board. If people are not getting anything from the program, why do the expansion?

Commissioner Evans questioned whether the numbers served were correct. We need to make sure we are presenting accurate numbers.

Ms. Fine conveyed details of the program including information about success rates for students in the program, time periods for which the students participate and how paraprofessionals are utilized.

Ms. Tripi asked for clarification on the process. Should the data be presented with the resolution or prior to?

Commissioner Powell stated it was a last minute agenda item and just because projects have Chief level support, does not mean they should be pushed through without "due process". The complete proposal should come to the committee at once.

Commissioners Garcia and Powell would like to see the information in a format that can be easily understood. They would like a formal report that includes data outlining the program's success. Project cost needs to

be included in the report as well (i.e. paraprofessionals, management, etc.).

Dr. Cliby noted that the SDOs were interested in expanding the program. They have received notable anecdotal feedback from the schools that piloted and wanted to push it out to more schools this year.

Commissioner Powell asked where this was funded from.

Dr. Cliby noted that it would be funded from Instructional Technology, but that it was eligible for NYS categorical aid reimbursement (instructional software).

Commissioner Garcia motioned to table consideration of this proposal until the November committee meeting and asked that the previously requested information be prepared for that time. Adopted 3-0.

Commissioner Powell noted that this was not due to absence of merit, but rather process reasons.

ACTION: Provide the following information on the Fast ForWord pilot: extent to which each school utilized its licenses; progress of participating students; total cost information not just licensing costs; how many more students will be served; what is the intended population and how will they be identified.

ii. Achieve 3000 (Kid Biz)

Commissioner Powell is concerned that Achieve 3000 mirrors the objectives of Scientific Learning (Fast ForWord).

Dr. Cliby stated that the program is similar in that it is a remedial reading program but that it utilizes phonetics as a basis.

Commissioner Evans questioned the annual cost.

Dr. Cliby stated that there is an annual per school licensing fee and that the program will be implemented in five buildings.

Commissioner Evans inquired about the selection process. He wanted to know how the schools were selected.

Dr. Cliby stated schools are invited to review programs that have already been assessed and evaluated. The schools then make the decision on whether or not they want to utilize a program.

iii. Ableware

Motion to recommend to the Board made by Commissioner Garcia, Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 3-0.

III. Update on Program Based Budgeting Progress

Commissioner Garcia asked when the budget would be received. Ms. Tripi stated that the draft budget book numbers would go to the Board in March.

Commissioner Powell stated that the Finance Committee would like to see program based budgets in advance. Ms. Tripi will meet with Ms. Rohring to discuss how this can be accomplished and when would be best.

Commissioner Powell asked if the grant portfolio could be itemized beyond the five categories covered in section II of the Program Based Budgeting for 2006-07 Budget memo.

Commissioner Evans agreed that the breakdown would be useful during the budget process.

Ms. Tripi agreed, the grant portfolio can be itemized and the percentage of grant funds used to cover the pool of projects selected will be clearly stated.

Commissioner Evans asked from the proposed template if the Non-Salary Expenses would be broken down further.

Ms. Tripi stated that it could be done.

ACTION:

- Discussion about when to breakdown Non-Salary Expenses – what is the trigger?
- Ms. Rohring, Ms. Tripi and Mr. Connors to meet regarding updates on program based budgeting and including them in the schedule.

Motion to accept Commissioner Powell's recommendations by Commissioner Garcia. Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 3-0.

IV. Lessons Learned 2005-2006 Budget Process

Commissioner Powell opened and the floor for questions.

Commissioner Garcia stated that he was OK with the budget process but disappointed with the timeliness of getting the budget posted to the website.

Commissioner Powell would like feedback regarding early posting of the budget to the website added to the Lessons Learned document.

ACTION: Revise Lessons Learned document to include electronic posting of the proposed budget.

Ms. Tripi stated that automated development and new procedures for running reports will enhance the overall budget process.

Commissioner Garcia asked about the implementation of PeopleSoft. Ms. Tripi stated that all the financials in the budget book were run utilizing PeopleSoft and that the same will be done again this year. Commissioner Garcia asked for project status information. It was noted that a full update is on the Finance Committee agenda for November.

Commissioner Garcia wanted to know if we would be on time with the 2006-2007 budget?

Commissioner Evans stated that if we follow the budget timeline, we should be OK.

Ms. Tripi agreed.

V. RAN Update

Commissioner Powell asked how the conclusion to not seek a RAN was reached, particularly since the Board authorized in August.

Ms. Tripi stated that she was comfortable with the District's cash flow situation and made the decision not to short-term borrow.

Commissioner Garcia inquired further about the District's ability to meet obligations without the RAN given the volatility of its revenue flow.

Ms. Tripi reiterated her previous statement.

VI. Next Meeting – November 8, 2005

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Evans, Seconded by Commissioner Garcia. Adopted 3-0 at 6:32 p.m.