

**Rochester Board of Education
Finance Committee Of the Whole
May 4, 2004 at 6:00 P.M.
Minutes**

Attendance: Commissioners Bowers, Brown, Evans, Porter, Powell and Thompson.

Absent: Commissioner Garcia

Commissioner Bowers called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
Commissioner Thompson arrived at 6:05 p.m.

I. Consideration of Superintendent's proposed budget – (10 minutes)

Commissioner Bowers explained that the Committee of the Whole was meeting for the sole purpose of voting to authorize, or not, the Superintendent to prepare the final budget document based on the DRAFT document provided. This final budget document will be considered by the Board at a special meeting. Board members will also be given an opportunity to propose and authorize additional reductions or restorations to the budget this evening.

Commissioner Powell had no proposed additions or reductions to the proposed budget. She requested that there be one addition to the budget book, a table showing the organizational adjustments that have been made during 2003-04 and for 2004-05. All the commissioners present concurred. **Vote: Yes**

Commissioner Brown supports the budget as presented. **Vote: Yes**

Commissioner Evans supports the budget as presented. **Vote: Yes**

Commissioner Thompson agrees to authorize the Superintendent to prepare the final budget based on the draft. Before the Board convenes a special meeting for formal consideration of the 2004-05 budget, she sought to have the following questions answered:

On Page 6 of the "Responses to Questions/Concerns" received in April 30, 2004 Board packet:

Q Re: the response to Question #3: Please see Dr. Rivera's 4/15/04 School Closing Report, page 12 and 13 of the Appendices. Nothing

is listed under "Programs include" for Lofton and School #36, suggesting that the schools' programs and other assets were not taken into consideration when the deliberations were taking place.

- Q. Re: the response to Question #4: It's sometimes difficult to distinguish support that Lofton and #36 received because of the difficulties they were experiencing from support other schools were receiving as part of the general support to schools. In light of the role academic performance played in the recommendation to close these two schools, my question goes to what support they were receiving above and beyond that given to other schools?

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- Q. Re: the response to Question #5: The response shows how each element (age, condition, etc., for Facility Evaluation; ELA rating and trend, etc., for Academic Performance) contributed to the score of a particular criterion, rather than break down *how a score was determined*. Please see pages 4 and 5 of the Appendices of the 4/15/04 School Closing Report for examples of scoring rubrics, then provide the scoring rubrics for Facility Evaluation and Performance Rankings. (In other words, if a building is up to 10 years old, did it receive a score of 1? 11-25 years old received a score of 2? The same for the other sub-criteria, please.)

Also, the response doesn't address what criteria were considered and *not* included in the assessment.

- Q. Re: the response to Question #6: I asked how stakeholders were involved in the deliberations that *preceded* the recommendation for school closings. The response explains how the recommendation was *shared* — after it had been developed.

Commissioner Thompson indicated that the Board will make a good faith effort at a recommended budget. Questions raised with regard to the budget should not be perceived as a demonstration of no confidence. The Board simply wants to be certain that everything is taken into consideration. We will continue to improve the overall budget process.

Vote: Yes

COMMISSIONER PORTER indicated that he has problems with the budget as proposed. He wants to allow the Superintendent to put the book together in time to meet the statutory requirements, but he is concerned about closing Josh Lofton and School #36. He has collected data and will talk with staff further. **Vote: Yes**

COMMISSIONER BOWERS recognizes that there is not a majority to support the additional cuts he suggested in the previous meeting. He will abstain from voting. **Vote: Abstain**

On the procedural question of whether to authorize the Superintendent to prepare the final budget document based on the proposed draft, it passes 5-0 with Commissioner Bowers abstaining and Commissioner Garcia absent.

IV. Next Meeting – May 18, 2004 at 6:00 p.m.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Thompson, Seconded by Commissioner Evans. Adopted 6-0 at 6:25 p.m. with Commissioner Garcia absent.