

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee Meeting

November 10, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Attendance: Commissioner Cynthia Elliott (Chair), and Commissioner Allen Williams; District Staff: Beverly Gushue, Anibal Soler, Jr.; Parent Representative: Felix Jacobs, Board Staff: Jacqueline Morgan

Absent: Commissioner Melisza Campos

Commissioner Elliott called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

I. Minutes

Motion to approve the September Minutes was made by Commissioner Williams; seconded by Commissioner Elliott. **Adopted 2-0; with Commissioner Campos absent.**

II. Firefighter Trainee Program Update

Mrs. Soler began the presentation with the history of the Firefighter Trainee Program. Mr. Soler noted that the Fire Fighter Program has been in existence since 1993 when it began as an after school program for two days a week for at risk City youth.

The initial program had students working with firefighters at specific fire stations across the City of Rochester to learn basic skills in professionalism, ethics, fire science and tactics for one day a week. The second day was after school activities.

In 1994, the first class of Firefighter trainees graduated from East High School and went to the Fire Academy to train to become professional Firefighters for the City of Rochester. The focus of the program had changed from providing focus to at risk youth to providing diversity within the rank and file of the Rochester Fire Department and providing opportunities unique to students who resided within the bounds of the City of Rochester.

Mr. Soler's presentation included a listing of 49 current firefighters who were a part of the Firefighter Trainee Program.

Mr. Soler noted that the Firefighter Trainee Program is not currently operating. He also noted that East High School and the Rochester City School District would like to either reinstate the old program or to introduce a new Public Safety Trainee Program.

Commissioner Williams stated that the City had commissioned a study to discontinue the program and wants a copy of the results of the study.

Commissioner Williams noted that this program has never been popular with certain groups; and wanted to know who pulled the plug on the program. Mr. Soler stated that when he came on board as principal for East High School he was directed to revise the program; and noted that the District is ready to move forward with the program, but he has never received final approval from the City's Fire Marshall for the program.

Commissioner Elliott wanted to know how soon this program can be restored. She noted that this program will not be off table; and that she wants District students to be involved. She also noted that she is scheduling a meeting with the president of the Firefighter's Union to address this issue; and that she would have a conversation with the superintendent regarding moving the Firefighter Trainee Program forward.

Mr. Soler noted that the program is able to start at East High School in January.

Mr. Soler noted that he would like to see this program expand to become a multi-pathway to public safety. The expanded program would be designed to provide public safety career exploration opportunities to high school juniors and seniors to assist them in transitioning to career related employment or college coursework driven by their career choice. All RCSD high schools will be given the opportunity to offer the Public Safety Career exploration course for students in their junior year and seniors would then participate in a Co-op program operating at a central location, such as the Public Safety Training Facility or other suitable location.

Commissioner Williams noted that he had concerns that the expansion would have less of a focus on the Firefighter Trainee Program; and wanted to know where the District is now in returning the Firefighter Trainee Program at East High School.

Ms. Gushue noted that she had scheduled a meeting with Molly Clifford from the City to discuss this issue. Ms. Gushue also noted that she would like to bring in students from other schools into the program.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. was moved by Commissioner Elliott seconded by Commissioner Williams. **Adopted 2-0.**

The next meeting of the Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee is scheduled to be held on **Wednesday, February 9, 2010, at 6:00 p.m.**