

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Excellence in Student Achievement Committee Meeting
October 7, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Attending: Commissioners: Van White (Chair), Mary Adams. District Staff: Ray Giamartino, Beverly Burrell-Moore, Brenda Pacheco and Juliette Pennyman. Parent Representative: Craig Cypher. Board Staff: Kimberly Turner

Absent: Commissioner Cynthia Elliott.

I. **Motion made by Commissioner White to approve the September 16, 2013 minutes from the Excellence in Student Achievement Committee (ESAC) meeting.** Commissioner Adams. Mr. Cypher concurred. Adopted 3-0.
Commissioner Adams requested changes to the minutes; minutes were updated to reflect her changes.

II. **Suspension Policy and Procedure presentation** by Brenda Pacheco, Chief of Secondary Schools: What is in place to support the emotional and social supports of students who are in long-term or short-term suspension?

Ms. Pacheco stated that she has been working on a plan to address school climate since spring 2013. She attended the "Right Foot School Climate Conference". Ms. Pacheco stated that she was charged with helping Principals, Teachers and Administrators set a positive tone for school climate; discipline and climate yields to instructional outcome. Ms. Pacheco stated that communication between the student's home and school was important and parents need to be involved and understand expectations; setting the tone in the classroom, policies and procedures. This was outlined in school meetings, handbook and communications that went to the student's home.

Ms. Pacheco shared suspension data from previous years; suspensions were duplicated for in-school, out-of school and long-term suspensions. Ms. Pacheco stated that the data showed suspensions were down and it was necessary to now put preventive measures in place thereby being proactive. Ms. Pacheco stated that one of the goals was to reduce suspension by 5% specifically those that were caused by disciplinary actions for repeat behaviors.

Ms. Pacheco shared that the goal would be achieved by including the following items:

- LyncX Academy program, on Marshall Campus, as a central location, 1 campus with multiple services and alternatives. Students make the choice to attend the LyncX program. Orientation with family is held prior to school starting and all expectations are made clear in the beginning. Criteria: students with numerous suspensions, duplicate suspensions.
- Services are in place to insure that students continue their studies (i.e. Regents track, CTE programs, GED), keeping in touch with graduation credits, future aspirations and showing them how to achieve this. LyncX Academy has 235 students, servicing 7-12 grades; including 97 students who are youth in transition. These are students who exited the District and are returning from programs such as Crestwood, Hillside and Villa of Hope (formerly St. Joseph Villa).
- Teachers and Staff in place who understand the needs of the students. LyncX Academy staff has been selected by special application process. There is a Transitional Director, Transitional Counselors and Case managers to manage students in the classroom setting and ensure their success. When the youth transitions out of LyncX the Case Manager, transitions with them to ensure they are successful in next school setting and provide emotional and social supports.

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Excellence in Student Achievement Committee Meeting
October 7, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

- Meets the needs of students who were currently in different programs such as former I'm Ready, out of school suspension, Youth and Justice, Crestwood, Hillside, North S.T.A.R, hospital and home instruction. LyncX Academy and PM school meet these needs.
- Intervention Specialists replace Reaction Specialists. LyncX is also a progressive intervention program and continues to meet students on continuous basis with choices and alternatives.
- Multiple partnerships meet the social needs of youth include Hillside Children Center, Mary Cariola, Pathways to Peace, and Youth for Change to name a few.

Ms. Pacheco commented on the former North S.T.A.R students as they often have difficult behaviors and need emotional and social supports. Currently LyncX Academy has 38 former North S.T.A.R. students that are 12:1:2, in grades 7-12. They are not separated and are helped to transition back to comprehensive schools. The students are grouped by grade only. Everything is integrated. Teachers (special education, generalist(i.e. English, Social Studies), Teaching Assistant, Paraprofessional), and share the campus with All City High using same library and science.

Commissioner White stated that is disturbing that many of these initiatives, crucial in an urban school setting, have not been initiated in the past. These are basic common things.

Ms. Pacheco mentioned that Ira Swartz (NYSED office) visited LyncX program and was impressed with the program, the dynamics of staff and students.

Ms. Pacheco stated that there has been a spike in long-term suspension particularly in 8th, 9th and 10th grades from primarily 2 schools. There are 56 students. 18 students have gone through the long-term process; they serve time and could be returned to school. They are not currently at LyncX Academy due to the suspension process. 24 hours after referrals are made to long-term suspensions the students are assigned to PM school, 5 days a week, for three hours of instruction. Mandatory orientation with the parents attending to discuss behaviors that got them there. The outcome of long-term suspensions may be that they are recommended to stay at PM School or attend LyncX Academy. There is a coordinator at the PM school that helps transition these students. The PM schools are at two locations: East and LyncX Academy. There is a Generalist Teacher, Special Education Teacher, and a Teacher Assistant assigned to meet the needs of these students.

PM School is 1-15 days, level 2 offenses: defined as assaults, fights, something that is detrimental to the students or the school community, repetitive offenses, warnings, last chance resort. Preapproval is needed from the Chief of Schools before this option can be used: documentation is needed on what was done to help the student prior to the referral (i.e. what the school did to help student, counseling. Before the student is placed in PM School, interventions are in place prior to approval, conflict resolution is in place, contract with parent and child before the student is returned to school. All the educational needs of student is in place prior to being assigned to PM School, this helps to make sure the student is not losing instructional time.

Ms. Pacheco addressed the students who are older students in lower grades because of repeated grades numerous times (i.e. 7th and 8th grade repeated numerous times) and in need of a place to get back on track. Each school recommended 10 students to the LyncX Academy.

In School Suspension (ISS) is 1 – 3 days, has a Teacher Assistant specially selected and trained to meet the needs of the students: they were given their roles and responsibilities. The class room is equipped with computer and attendance is taken. This classroom is used for minor infractions (insubordination, late to school, student cannot control themselves in the classroom, fighting, bullying) or numerous parent contacts, contracts, Social Work contract –

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Excellence in Student Achievement Committee Meeting
October 7, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

other things were in place besides suspending the students. In order to return to class the student is part of conflict resolution and Restorative Justice Process. Pathways to Peace is at certain schools (Fredrick Douglas, Charlotte, Wilson) as well as Youth for Change and SWANN. Office of Parent Engagement will offer classes and workshops to help parents meet the need of their child.

Out of school suspension is only for students in grade 7-12; K-6 is given more supports; currently working with Mary Cariola to help provide these supports.

Ms. Pacheco stated that the troubled students usually account for 2-3% of student population and are relating to something they are not getting their academic setting, their needs are not being met therefore they are causing problems. They need resources. There are resources at the schools – see above program; in addition she mentioned AmeriCorp.

Ms. Pacheco stated that long-term suspension is for the severe level 3 infractions and include the 5 non-negotiable, (cyber bullying, gang related activity, trespassing with intent to harm, weapons and drugs). Ms. Pacheco stated that 80% of incidences of long-term suspension has happened off school grounds, Facebook, Twitter, bus etc. and continued into the schools.

Ms. Pacheco stated that the communication process for PM School, LyncX Academy and suspensions: Building Administrations sends documentation to the Chief of Schools regarding any referrals to these programs. The Administrator provides lead way and exact reasons fro referral. Included is information about the student to be able to have exact academic needs met once they are sent to these programs. The instructions are sent to the school as to what needs to happen. There are key staff at the schools to support this process included are Teacher, Assistant, IT person (help scheduling support) and Coordinator (PM School)– within 24 hours the parent takes the child to school. A letter is sent to parent, hand delivered as well as mailed – given them time and expectation and the length of time they will stay at school.

Ms. Pacheco stated that the above mentioned services and process should be in place by November 1, 2013.

Commissioner Adams asked about how the needs are met for K-6 graders: Mr. Giamartino stated that suspensions are not given at the K-3 grade. School # 29 is used along with other resources; there is a current comprehensive review of the regulation for interventions at this grade level and how this is currently being proactively provided, preventative measures that are not punitive and encourage positive behavior.

Commissioner Adams asked is SWISS currently being used. Mr. Giamartino stated that SWISS does not integrate with our current systems – IMT is creating an internal E Tracking system that will communicate with our SMS systems and help to trend incidents and reactions. To ensure compliance key staff is being provided the appropriate training. Chiefs of Schools are available and on site looking at data such as attendance and interventions. They know where students are. Mr. Giamartino stated that his office is working thru compliance; Professional Development, Principal meeting, Carols Leal's office and accountability of the schools entering the correct information. Mr. Giamartino mentioned the following point: real time data is available to see what is going on in the school, support ins offered to the schools early because the data can be reviewed,– questions can be asked based on the review of the data, does student have Behavior Intervention Plan, more questions to make sure that they are not quick to put student in ISS; talking to students in ISS to get to the root cause of the problem.

Mr. Cypher asked what is being done with the root cause information. Ms. Pacheco stated that a Psychologist, Social Worker and support systems are available for students to help student with issues that are hindering them.

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Excellence in Student Achievement Committee Meeting
October 7, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Commissioner White asked a question are parents notified of suspension rights that have extended 5 days, i.e right to appeal suspension. This has been a problem in the past. Commissioner White also asked if parents are required to notification of suspension less than 5 days? Ms. Burrell-Moore stated that this is currently being done and follow up notification committee of this is forthcoming.

Mr. Cypher stated that there are measures should be done by Administrators and Teacher and student's family members to confirm that there are any issues. Mr. Cypher stated that low suspensions rate does not mean that a child feels safe.

III. **Elementary School Report Cards** were presented by Ray Giamartino, Chief of School Transformation and Juliette Pennyman, Chief of Schools. An example of the report card is available upon request and will be used for the 2013 – 2014 school year.

Key Points:

- Report card format is easy to read, clear and simple
- New nine point scale consist of Rochester City School District metrics easy to follow and understand
- Color coded schema is used to indicate student's progress. This is presented to parents. Easy to understand
- User friendly for teachers to identify and select student's progress
- Friendly indicators for parents to review child's progress
- Elementary Report Card Rubric identifies child progress based on the common core standards

Action Items:

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner White at 8:05 p.m.; seconded by Commissioner Adams.