

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Excellence in Student Achievement Committee
June 11, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Attendance: Commissioner Van White (Chair), Commissioner Allen Williams, District Staff: Mark Davis, Brandon Keaveny, Lourdes Odell, Marilynn Patterson-Grant, John Piper, Vickie Ramos, Leelabari Worwor (student), Board Staff: Jacqueline Morgan

Absent: Commissioner Melisza Campos

Commissioner White called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

I. **Minutes**

Motion to approve May minutes was made by Commissioner Williams; Seconded by Commissioner White. **Adopted 2-0 with Commissioner Campos absent.**

II. **English Language Learners Overview**

Lourdes Odell, Executive Director of ELL, and John Piper, Director of ESOL, introduced themselves and gave overviews of their departments.

It was noted that there were 771 language assessment and placements this school year; and that the goal for both the Bilingual and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Programs are to have students competent in their native language as well as in English.

ESOL students are provided sheltered content instruction for 1-3 years before entering transitional classes.

Leelabari Worwor, a 10th grade ESOL student from Nigeria attending Jefferson High School, spoke to the committee extolling the benefits of attending ESOL classes. He stated that prior to his ESOL placement, that he would sleep in class because he could not understand the English language. He went on to state that he could not read, write or spell in English. He said that it took him one year in the ESOL Program to learn English.

The committee was presented with new data regarding gains made by students in the Bilingual and ESOL Programs. Both Commissioners

White and Williams were disturbed by the data, as it was different from the data that was presented to the Board which suggested that the programs were not working at School No. 14. Commissioner Williams stated that the data presented now tells a different story than what was presented to the Board previously.

Action Item: Commissioner White will send a memo to Superintendent Brizard regarding the difference in the data presented to the Board.

Ms. Odell stated that the ELL Department is offering new opportunities to students for placement; and that additional staffing is being added. The teachers are being trained to provide engaging strategies. ESOL teachers modify curriculum so that students can understand the curriculum. The text has to be modified for comprehension. It was noted that the ELL Department does a lot of collaborating with other departments.

Ms. Odell gave an overview of the technology initiatives for ELL students and also an overview of the next steps for the department including benchmarks.

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Williams at 6:35 p.m.; seconded by Commissioner White. **Adopted 2-0 with Commissioner Campos absent.**

The next meeting is scheduled for July 9, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.