

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Excellence in Student Achievement Committee
April 9, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Attendance: Commissioner White (Chair), Commissioner Williams, Commissioner Elliott, J. C. Brizard, M. Doyle, R. Giamartino, B. Keaveny, J. Silvers

Commissioner White called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

I. Minutes

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

II. Proposal to Phase Out International Finance Career High School and Bioscience and Health Careers High School Presentation

Superintendent Brizard gave opening remarks on the proposal to phase out the International Finance Career High School and the Bioscience and Health Careers High Schools at Franklin. M. Doyle followed with a Power Point presentation outlining the reasons for the proposal to phase out the two schools. Some of the reasons are as follows: The schools are in low demand, the schools are currently on the SURR list, the schools are not positioned to excel; the District is trying to pre-empt what they believe is inevitable, curriculum is not easy to hold on to, parents not selecting these schools is an indication that the schools are not wanted.

Commissioner White asked why phasing out would not be better:

A. Abdulmateen, principal of International Finance Career High School, stated that he feels that the school is being penalized. He states that they are meeting the social needs of the students; and that the school should be given the needed support from the District instead of being phased. International theme is valid and should be supported.

M. Aronson, principal of Bioscience and Health Careers High School, stated that the school does not have the health careers component of the school. Because of this, they cannot meet the needs of the students in this area. The school needs District support in this area.

Commissioner Elliott questioned what was in place to be offered to the students if the schools are phased out; and how the District would accommodate these career fields. She also stated that we should expose our students to these career fields. There should be alternatives for these programs if they are being phased out. Commissioner Elliott stated that she does not hear what we're replacing the programs with. She stated that she cannot support the phase out without something to replace the programs with.

Action Item: Provide written report re: CTE courses in other schools. (A. Abdulmateen)

R. Giamartino stated that the overall concept of phasing out these schools came from SED. We are compelled to pre-plan for our students. Superintendent Brizard stated that because the schools are on the SURR list, if they don't meet the requirements, SED will close the schools in one year and the District will not have the opportunity of a planned phase out.

Commissioner White stated that the 2007 four year cohort is the first class that Finance would have had an impact on with a 42% graduation rate; and wanted to know the 2004 cohort for Finance.

Action Item: Provide information for 2004 cohort. (J. Silvers)

Commissioner Williams requested to have data for students who made these two schools their first choice.

Action Item: Provide data for students who made these two schools their first choice. (J. Silvers)

Commissioner White asked what the demand for Global Media Arts High School was. J. Silvers responded that it was 46.

Action Item: Provide what the demand is for Global Media Arts High School. (M. Doyle)

Commissioner White wonders if phasing out these schools will have a demoralizing affect. M. Doyle responded that there is not enough significant data available to answer that question at this time, however, there will be more community meetings held; and at that time they will look at school morale and transition.

Commissioner Williams asked what would happen if the schools do not meet benchmarks. J. Silvers stated that the State shut the schools down

immediately. Commissioner Williams then stated that if scores don't meet State standards SSED will close the school right away. He then asked A. Abdulmateen and M. Aronson to think about which risk they are willing to accept – to wait for State scores and possibly keep the school open or to wait for State scores and possibly have SED to immediately close the school versus the Board voting to phase out the schools in an orderly fashion.

The Committee did not vote on whether to recommend the Administration's proposals to phase out the International Finance Career High school and the Bioscience and Health Careers High School.

The following students spoke in support of keeping the schools open: Kiana Singletary, Destinee Howard and Ashley Clay.

The following parents spoke in support in keeping the schools open: Linda Rose, Anita Jones, Christopher Tillman and Rachel Cleveland.

The following school staff spoke in support of keeping the schools open: Annette Pennella, Karla Allen and Bryant Cromartie, Sr.

The following members of the community spoke in support of keeping the schools open: Karen Pelc.

Commissioner White stated that the public and community will continue to have opportunities to have dialogue with the Excellence in Student Achievement Committee regarding the proposed phase out of the two schools.

Motion to adjourn was moved by Commissioner Williams at 8:30 p.m.; seconded by Commissioner White. **Adopted 2-0 with Commissioner Campos absent.**

The next meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2009, at 5:30 p.m.