

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Excellence in Student Achievement Committee
December 2, 2008
5:30 p.m.
Conference Room 3-A

MINUTES

Attendance: Commissioner White, Chair; Commissioner Williams, and Commissioners Brennan and Elliott (not Committee members); District Staff: Superintendent Brizard, Mary Doyle, Kim Dyce Faucette, Raymond Giamartino, Terrence Hofer, Cheryl Holloway, Susan Kaufmann, Marilynn Patterson-Grant, Margaret Porter, Jeanette Silvers, Gloria Sullivan; Board Staff: Hazel Washington

Commissioner White called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. Commissioner Campos arrived at 5:35 p.m.

Agenda Items:

I. Minutes

Motion to approve the October Minutes was made by Commissioner Williams; Seconded by Commissioner White. **Adopted 2-0**

II. Discussion on the Legal Dropout Age

Marilynn Patterson-Grant opened with a statement which included a 10-point plan for addressing the dropout rate. Superintendent Brizard discussed the vision for high school strategy. The reasons that students gave for dropping out of school were that it was not interesting, there was too much freedom, and students already had missed too much school. The strategies to increase graduation rates, will assist with reducing the dropout rate, and include extended learning time and raising the level of rigor. The ideas include preventative strategies (make sure kids graduate on time) and recuperative strategies (options for kids).

Mary Doyle described/discussed the portfolio which includes existing successful schools, Dream Schools, new schools from best practice models and transforming existing schools. Jeanette Silvers explained the difference between the various cohorts: annual cohort, dropout cohort, and total cohort.

Margaret Porter discussed the challenges for students that are incarcerated; noted that there are 1,100 children, ages 5 to 15, in foster care; a number of them have mental health issues that are not being addressed and there is a lack of collaboration with stakeholders. Several students that are on adult probation who attend schools (age 16) need chemical dependency support, health care, and support through pretrial

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release programs. The Superintendent stated that these kids upon leaving incarceration are often put back into the same environment where they had problems.

Commissioner Elliott would like to increase the legal dropout age to 18 at the state level, and would like to research the possibility of increasing the legal age at the local level. Jeanette Silvers stated that we follow state policy on addressing the dropout situation; 53 percent of students are considered unknown dropouts. The Superintendent stated that elementary schools do a good job at following protocol in regard to dropouts; high schools, however, are lacking. The District has communicated to parents that kids are required to have 22 credits in the required categories, in order to graduate. Dropouts tend to be over-aged and under credited. Local diplomas are being phased out in New York State. Guidance counselors are going to be restructured.

III. Presentation from Iglesia Educational Program

Karen Iglesia gave a brief overview of the tutoring programs. There are more than 150 teachers, 13 sites, and 80 employees from the District; a number of students are gang members. Iglesias is the largest tutoring provider of **No Child Left Behind** students in the District; they provide transportation, hot meals and snacks; are open 7 days a week, tutors are in some school buildings during the day; and they have offered tutoring to students for free if they don't qualify.

Reggie Jones gave a testimonial on programs and staff. The Rochester City School District graduate and RIT student, was a former student of the tutoring program. Carolyn Gray, retired Kodak executive staff, gave her perspective on the program. Kenny Lee, Executive Director of the YMCA on Thurston Road, sends students from Teen City to the tutoring center. Kids look forward to attending. Brendan Noon, Rochester City School District physics teacher at Edison, provides a pre-engineering curriculum. Michele Alberti, Math AIS Coordinator at No. 6 School, provides a pre-engineering program, literacy program and another program through the City. Arkee Allen, Rochester City School District teacher, Rochester Matters at East, has services provided in the school. Lynda Frazier, parent of a Harvard student who received tutoring, read a portion of the letters from her son on the impact the Iglesias program had on him.

Action Item: Terry Hofer will provide data on Hispanic students

Adjournment

Motion made by Commissioner Campos at 7:41 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Williams. **Adopted 3-0**