

# Rochester Board of Education Quality Assurance Committee

## Minutes Monday, May 7, 2007

**Attendance:** Commissioners S. Thompson, C. Elliott, V. White; Board staff L. Dunsmoor; Administrators M. Cianca, C. Holloway, J. Silvers; Mike Washousky, New York State Education Department.

Chairwoman Shirley Thompson convened the meeting at 6 p.m. Commissioner Elliott asked that a discussion of the drop-out age be added to the agenda.

### **Schools Under Registration Review (SURR) Presentation**

M. Cianca and C. Holloway's presentation included information on the definition of SURR schools, differences between SURR and the No Child Left Behind Act, and the SURR process, including activities of a SURR team, development/implementation of the SURR improvement plan, and explicit timelines. The SURR process is the primary method by which the Board of Regents holds schools accountable for academic performance. If sufficient progress is not made on a timeline set by the State Education Department, the Commissioner can recommend that the Regents revoke a school's registration, thereby closing it. Local districts retain the option of closing a school themselves until the Commissioner makes a recommendation.

### ***Discussion***

Commissioner Elliott asked about scores at Charlotte High School. Dr. Cianca said that at one time, Charlotte had a higher proportion of special education students than other buildings. When the District eliminated middle schools and moved to a grades 7-12 secondary configuration, it provided the opportunity to better balance the special education/general education students throughout secondary schools, but there are still some schools with a higher proportion of special education students than other schools.

Commissioner White asked how many schools are performing at the 150 score math target established by New York State. Chairwoman Thompson requested a list of where all schools are regarding the performance index; J. Silvers said she would provide the data.

**ACTION: J. Silvers to provide list of where schools are regarding the performance index.** (Completed.)

Commissioner Elliott asked if there is a process in place if a teacher does not participate in professional development offerings. C. Holloway confirmed that there is; if teachers do not attend the required professional development, corrective actions will be initiated.

Commissioner White asked about specifics regarding the improvement process at Frederick Douglass School, which the District recently announced would close at the end of the 2006-07 school year. Mr. Washousky briefly discussed the improvement plan at Frederick Douglass. Mr. Washousky inferred that if the District hadn't decided to close Frederick Douglass, the State would have. He said he would provide copies of the original SURR report issued in 2002. Commissioner Elliott pointed out that if Commissioners were made more

aware of particular issues faced by the District at the State level, they could be more effective policy amendment advocates.

**Action:** M. Washousky to provide 2002 SURR report for Frederick Douglass. (Completed.)  
L. Dunsmoor to provide the suspension rate at Douglass and distribute to committee.

Commissioner Elliott asked whether students' opinions are part of the school improvement plan process and Mr. Washousky confirmed that they are.

Chairwoman Thompson asked for specifics of monthly reviews. Mr. Washousky explained that state representatives visit classrooms and cross-check the improvement plan to monitor implementation.

**Action:** L. Dunsmoor to provide copies of the improvement plans for Frederick Douglass, Franklin High School and Monroe High School for C. Elliott. (Completed.)

### **Legal Drop-Out Age**

Commissioner Elliott said students may simply need more time to ensure that they make a mature decision regarding leaving school before earning a diploma. She would like the Board to petition the state to allow Rochester to increase the legal drop-out age to 18. The committee agreed by consensus to send this proposal to the Board's Community and Intergovernmental Relations Committee for discussion.

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner White. Second by Chairwoman Thompson. Adopted 3-0 at 8:50 p.m.