

Quality Assurance Committee  
Monday, September 18, 2006  
6 p.m.

Minutes

**Attendance:** Chairwoman Thompson, Commissioner Elliott, Board staff L. Dunsmoor and S. Lee, District staff C. Holloway, M. Cianca, K. Dyce-Faucette, B. Jarzyniecki. Commissioner Henley absent.

Chairwoman Thompson convened the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

**1. Mission/Vision/Scope**

Chairwoman Thompson called for a few minutes of silent review of her latest draft of the document; she described it as a final revision including all the discussions to date. She welcomed feedback from Commissioner Elliott.

Commissioner Elliott said that, having participated in the Strategic Framework planning sessions, she believes that strategic planning should be driven by the Board, not the Superintendent. In light of that, the proposed document may need revision to reflect the Board's strategic planning role. She emphasized that the policy body, the Board of Education, should be driving the strategic planning process with the District participating, not the other way around.

Commissioner Thompson said she appreciated the feedback and noted that it is debatable as to who is driving what. She added that nothing in the proposed document precludes QA and/or the Board from taking a more active role in the strategic planning process.

Commissioner Elliott emphasized that there should be language in the proposed document that the Board of Education sets the strategic plan for the District.

Commissioner Thompson said she is not sure that QA is where the Board's role in strategic planning would be captured.

Referring to the document, Commissioner Elliott said she is not sure that this is what QA should be doing or not doing. She also noted that the name QA sends a micromanaging message, at least to her.

Commissioner Thompson asked Commissioner Elliott to show her what in the document was lacking or objectionable.

Commissioner Elliott said she was not able to do that.

Chairwoman Thompson noted that this meant the document will not move forward (as a recommendation to the full Board) at this time. She asked when Commissioner Elliott would be able to provide feedback.

Commissioner Elliott said she would get back to Chairwoman Thompson on Tuesday or Wednesday, and asked Chairwoman Thompson to contact her if she forgot. She also noted that Commissioner Henley may have input for the document.

Chairwoman Thompson speculated that a Committee Meeting of Whole called by QA could be a good vehicle for discussion of the document.

Commissioner Elliott pointed out that at the next QA meeting, the document could go forward the way it is if Commissioner Henley is present and she is outvoted. In that event, she said she will wait until there are like minds.

Commissioner Thompson again raised the idea of a Committee Meeting of the Whole.

Commissioner Elliott suggested that the document be left the way it is, saying that she is unconvinced that her colleagues will view the issue the same way, likely resulting in a 6-1 vote.

**ACTION:**

**Chairwoman Thompson/Commissioner Elliott to arrange meeting.**

**L. Dunsmoor to provide revised mission/vision statement electronically to C. Elliott, J. Henley**

## **II) Human Resources/Culture Change Report**

Chairwoman Thompson said she was raising this report at the committee level again, even though it had been approved by the full Board in December 2005, because QA has not received updates from the Superintendent on the information requests. She said the project needs a jump-start.

Commissioner Elliott asked what is meant by the term “Culture Change” and Chairwoman Thompson said it refers to the initiative being led by Chief of Diversity Michelle Hancock to cultivate a more diverse and inclusive environment in the District. Kim Dyce-Faucette called it an “umbrella term” covering several efforts.

Commissioner Elliott asked what the HR goals are for a diverse workforce and whether the goals were developed by the Board. Chairwoman Thompson said HR goals were not developed by the Board.

Commissioner Elliott said the Board needs to tell the Superintendent what the goals are. She said she wants to see 85 percent people of color in these positions, with 65 percent being African Americans and half of those being males because we have to have Black men teaching Black boys. She continued that this position is not about racism, it is about what works for the community, and hiring White women does not work. She said the Black/White cultures are different and that the African American culture is more spiritual. Commissioner Elliott reiterated that the Board should provide the goals and give them to the District to implement. She added that the community should define what is a qualified candidate for a position based on what that means to the community.

Chairwoman Thompson said she might disagree with some of the numbers cited by Commissioner Elliott but did not disagree overall; there needs to be many more people of color in the District. For her, educational credentials do not necessarily meet the definition of “qualified.” She noted that some movement is happening and she wants it to continue. Chairwoman Thompson said that until the Board has the information requested in the report, it will be difficult to make recommendations for improvement regarding retention, turnover, and processes.

Commissioner Elliott said she does not want to leave the initiatives in the hands of the District because she is not convinced people will do the right thing; she has heard of people hiring their friends -- there is always a way to get around policy. Regarding termination, she wants to see who is being terminated and have it broken down demographically. She said the Board needs to know what kind of systems are needed to keep the teachers who are here.

Chairwoman Thompson referred Commissioner Elliott to page 2, where there are information requests that get to that information. Commissioner Thompson wants to be able to see patterns of bias and have a basis of information to make recommendations.

Commissioner Elliott said there also needs to be salary information in the report, because she understands that there are secretaries who earn \$80,000 and Ph.Ds who earn \$70,000.

**Motion by Commissioner Elliott to have the Superintendent provide QA with the most current update on this data request, identify the barriers to more timely reporting, provide a timeline for when all the information can be expected, and make the data part of his quarterly report. Second by Commissioner Thompson, approved 2-0 with Commissioner Henley absent.**

## **3. Community Forum on Graduation**

Chairwoman Thompson said she was seeking a vote from this Committee that QA and CIGR will collaborate with the Superintendent and administration to convene a community forum on graduation. The effort would include looking at best practices locally and nationally, and bringing community partners together so all are aware of the different efforts in place.

Commissioner Elliott asked why the forum is being planned now.

Commissioner Thompson pointed out that the graduation rate is one of the top issues for the QA committee.

Commissioner Elliott said she would not want to see a forum in which the Board blames the community for the graduation rate. She also said that non-profit organizations are limited by the resources they have; the District is the one with the money and it is the District's responsibility to educate students. She said the forum should be one in which the Board asks the community what the District needs to do. It is important to create a partnership rather than get caught up in blaming. Commissioner Elliott said that what the community has to say is not valued by the District and she used the Rochester Children's Zone as an example. She said the proposed forum needs to be crafted better.

Chairwoman Thompson said she views the forum as an opportunity for information-sharing; it is difficult to know all the elements of what is happening regarding a particular issue. She hopes the forum will help identify challenges and impediments; not get into fingerpointing. The timeline for the forum is January, she said.

Commissioner Elliott said she could not make a motion at this time because it is the first she has heard of it. She would like to see more discussion and details about how it will be rolled out; she suggested it be added to the committee's October agenda.

Commissioner Thompson said she is hoping there is enough support on the Board for the idea to move it forward. She will raise it September 21 as an individual member.

#### **4. Other**

##### ***a. Strategic Plan***

Commissioner Elliott said she would like to see the work of QA done last winter in work sessions reintroduced to see how it connects or does not connect with the Strategic Plan.

##### **ACTION:**

**L. Dunsmoor to report on how the action items identified by QA in Winter 2006 dovetail with the strategic plan.**

**L. Dunsmoor to provide colored action items to QA members for next meeting.**

##### ***b. QA calendar***

Chairwoman Thompson said she would like to be very clear, in the future, regarding the QA calendar and agenda items. She would like a clean copy of topics, where they are on the calendar, and where they were originally. She said she wants to ensure that the Committee and District is working collaboratively to create agendas; committee members and administration have agenda items.

As an example, she used the Shared Decision-Making Biennial Review item that was originally scheduled for September.

Cheryl Holloway said it was not intended as a report but rather an update that the review approval is moving forward. Parent Partnership Council President Carolee Albert will be coming in to sign the document as soon as she has time. Chairwoman Thompson noted that QA has not signed off yet, however.

Commissioner Elliott asked about Minister Florence; why he did not sign off on the document. She questioned whether he was replaced as a parent representative because he did not cooperate with the District.

Marie Cianca said she did not want to speak to particulars, but as she recalled it was a matter of timing; the document is supposed to be signed off on by the district parent group, and the Parent Partnership Council became official once the school year was underway.

Chairwoman Thompson requested that the information, including specifics, be provided to QA for review prior to the next meeting. She also said Minister Florence's view should be provided in writing, and Commissioner Elliott agreed to contact him.

##### **ACTION:**

**C. Holloway and L. Dunsmoor will work together to provide clean copy of future agendas.**

**Administration to provide information in writing regarding how and why Minister Florence was replaced by PPC.**

**Commissioner Elliott to contact Minister Florence for his view.**

***c. Textbook update***

Chairwoman Thompson noted that there was a textbook update on tonight's agenda, but she pulled the item because the update had already been approved by QA and the full Board. Raising the issue again at QA would not have been the best use of the committee's time. She has contacted Commissioner Powell to see whether Finance wanted to raise the issue of why the approved purchase was not made originally.

***d. JROTC***

Commissioner Thompson asked when the JROTC evaluation would be completed by the administration. Shanai Lee said it is to be done for June 2007; Commissioner Thompson said the information is needed sooner. Kim Dyce-Faucette reported that she is working with Director of Social Studies Paul Lampe to crunch the timeline and provide the information sooner. Commissioner Elliott noted that an outside, objective consultant could be brought in for the work.

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Commissioner Elliott, Second by Chairwoman Thompson, approved 2-0 with Commissioner Henley absent at 7:25 p.m.