

**Rochester City School District Quality Assurance Committee Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2004**

Commissioner Powell convened the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

Committee Members in Attendance:

Commissioner Bowers
Commissioner Powell

Other Board Members Present:

Commissioner Thompson

District Staff Members Present:

Ms. Carlisle
Mr. Christman
Mr. MacGowan

Board Staff Members Present:

Ms. Rohring

Agenda Item I: Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve by Bowers, Seconded by Powell - adopted unanimously 2-0

Agenda Item II: Review of Project 2006 Data

Michael Christman shared a revised draft of the data compiled on the Project 2006 students and indicated that this draft separates unduplicated suspensions (long term, short term, and in school).

Mr. Christman observed that we have already lost 17% of the total students in Project 2006 (or 400 students): 17% have been lost, 31% have been retained, and 52% promoted to grade 10)

Commissioner Powell asked if staff could break out attendance by the percentage attributable to the lack of attendance due to suspensions – to arrive at the true nature of the truancy problem versus that related to suspension.

Mr. Christman indicated that he would do that.

Commissioner Bowers asked: "So what?" does the Project 2006 data tell us.

Mr. Christman indicated that the charge to the department was to define what the cohort looks like.

Ms. Carlisle indicated that staff needed to first define what to identify and then where to go with it / how to interpret the data.

Commissioner Bowers asked for an explanation of #9 (core courses).

Mr. Christman indicated the importance of looking back at record of the group in each successive year to see what courses the students have passed: at grade 9, he wouldn't expect much of anything in terms of course participation, however at grade 10, he said he would expect much more activity.

Commissioner Bowers questioned how the participation in courses would look because the District runs a three-year Math A session.

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Mr. Christman indicated that we have done that and that we have *Pathways* but that the State and feds look at four year trends.

Ms. Rohring asked whether or not we should eliminate *Pathways*.

Mr. MacGowan suggested that we could develop this five year program and get ahead of the curve -- set the trend in getting NCLB to look at different models such as *Pathways* and noted recent changes in attendance criteria and teacher certification.

Mr. Christman indicated that for an urban district, Rochester is subject to sanctions for attendance of all disaggregated groups (the more homogeneous a district, the less exposure the district has)

Mr. Christman indicated that staff still need to include migrant workers to the Project 2006 data base.

Commissioner Powell reiterated her interest in seeing the impact of suspensions on attendance. She also asked what the total days are that result in course failure.

Staff indicated a need to get back on that question. ... ACTION

Ms. Carlisle referenced the Dare to Care program as a program that factors in missed attendance as selection criteria.

Mr. Christman indicated that there isn't always a correlation between attendance and performance. For example, some students attend every day and fail and some don't attend and receive As.

Mr. MacGowan also referenced that the most significant jump (in terms of overall risk of failure) is from 0 to 1 suspension (as opposed to from 1 to 6 suspensions). He also indicated a different pattern between elementary and secondary attendance because elementary students have good attendance (94%). He indicated that we have as a District "solved our elementary attendance problem" in part due to moving from ½ day kindergarten to full day.

Ms. Carlisle asked whether or not the increase in elementary attendance has resulted in increased academic performance?

... ACTION

Mr. MacGowan referred to the fourth grade ELA study which indicated that attendance was not a factor and that the problems were elsewhere.

Commissioner Bowers returned to the Project 2006 profile and suggested a need to define dependent variable(s), such as the percentage of students moving to 11th and 12th grade on time or the percentage taking courses on time. He further suggested that staff could use four different classifications for #1 for the independent variable ethnicity (black, Latino, white, other); that #4 could be an independent variable indicative of maturity; and that #5 (attendance) could be either a dependent or independent variable.

Commissioner Bowers further suggested that staff go back and develop a model to see how independent variables play out in different schools and saw #2 as a subset.

Mr. MacGowan responded that the Board is then asking for an evaluation rather than the data – an evaluation that provides clean, straightforward, policy actionable variables or a model that tells us what to do.

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Commissioner Bowers referred to value in the literature that these variables have some research significance and suggested that staff use research theory or own experience to develop the model.

Ms. Carlisle proposed taking the data back and having staff interpret it and return to the Board with a model.

Mr. MacGowan referenced a document shared at the February 24 QA Committee meeting, which highlighted various studies and findings.

Commissioner Bowers wanted everything to be aligned and clearly driving student achievement and to make sure that if a variable is statistically significant, that it can drive programs & policies and program evaluation

Commissioner Thompson asked how failing schools can be factored in (e.g., teaching, leadership, etc.)

Commissioner Bowers suggested that what Commissioner Thompson was looking at were two different units of analysis (school versus student).

Mr. MacGowan suggested that school and student performance were two very different things.

Commissioner Bowers suggested that #2 was similar and wanted a model that was school-based or classroom based to arrive at actions.

Commissioner Thompson asked whether we need to collect data and develop a (school based) model.

Commissioner Powell expressed concern about whether or not early intervention or action would compromise the Project 2006 model.

Commissioner Bowers suggested that an intervention (such as after school programs) would simply add another variable.

Mr. Christman indicated that, at the building level, we don't always quantify variables (such as leadership) and that the Board would be asking staff to delve into HR data, not just student performance data and would need help in defining what the Board is looking for.

Commissioner Bowers suggested that, in the social sciences, there is widespread use of "surrogate" variables such as the number of grievances (as an indicator of school climate). He further suggested that staff use a factor analysis.

Mr. Christman asked if we will have built a system by the end of 2006 and sees this as a developing product.

Commissioner Powell suggested that we have Dr. Bowers spend time with Mr. Christman and Mr. MacGowan and that staff conduct a careful analysis at the end of the year to do preplanning and spend less time on reacting should a change in policy or practice make something fixable. ACTION

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Agenda Item III: Discussion of Strategic Planning Metrics

Ms. Carlisle shared a matrix created that mapped out data collected or reported on through a variety of methods: the strategic plan, the Board goals, the Superintendent goals, the Quarterly Report to the Board on Student performance, the Finance monthly and quarterly reports, the NYS Report Card.

Commissioner Bowers indicated that the matrix represented a report on what we report.

Ms. Carlisle concurred but, as was the case with the Project 2006 data points, identifying what the Board wants staff to report on, is a critical first step. She indicated that all the data points on the matrix, for the most part, are aligned but in some cases the District still needs to establish baseline measures (those are noted in pink on the matrix). She further suggested that reporting on a monthly basis is too activity driven and recommended a quarterly and annually reporting timeline.

Commissioner Thompson expressed interest in ensuring that the District is reporting out on what we say we are reporting out on (e.g., the strategic framework) and that we are clear about what that is.

Mr. Christman expressed his belief that quarterly reporting is best because of how the NYS exams fall and because quarterly reports represent two full marking periods of data.

Commissioner Powell questioned whether or not the Strategic Plan should be revised to reflect changes in measures or timeline and also expressed concern about the three groupings of schools (on the Quarterly Reports to the Board on Student Achievement) if movement on and off the three categories would influence the data.

Carlisle indicated that the strategic plan is a framework and that, if staff and the Board and Superintendent agree on reporting processes, the strategic plan should not have to be revised yet, though it is an evolving document and the Superintendent's goals and evaluation have really driven reporting.

Christman indicated the annual nature of categories and groupings of the schools based on the Superintendent's Accountability Reports. So, the school remains in that category for the year, but may change for the next.

Commissioner Powell questioned which best practices certain school level leaders are doing and suggested staff group them according to what makes successful leaders effective. She inquired about whether or not we can quantify best practices into a measure.

Christman continued to express some reservations.

Christman and MacGowan shared the results of evaluations done to date and the members present spent time discussing school 33 and replicating what Larry Ellison is doing there, and also discussed how 33 may really be the best school in New York State, given its poverty indices and stellar growth.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m. – motion to adjourn by Commissioner Bowers, seconded by Commissioner Powell.

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Actions:

- Christman, MacGowan, and Bowers to get together to consider an appropriate model for Project 2006.
- Christman to provide information on how many days a student has to miss in order to fail a course.
- MacGowan to provide data on whether or not an increase in elementary attendance has resulted in increased academic performance

Outstanding Action Items from 2/24:

- 1) Recap the cost of the Investigations textbook series, including information about the dollar amount saved by early commitment to the vendor
 - By March 6th Board packet
 - Michael Robinson

This information was shared in the Superintendent's February 6, 2004 report to the Board on pages 1 – 3.

- 2) Documentation on the Math textbook decision process in 2000 leading to Harcourt Brace recommendation and adoption - review files in Superintendent's office

A history of the 2000 decision making steps is not on file in the Superintendent or in the Math Department's offices.

- 3) If available, provide any math student achievement information for the five schools that have implemented the Investigations curriculum - those schools in the RCSD. Make comparison of student achievement pre implementation, with one year exposure, with multiple years of exposure.

No RCSD school has done a full implementation yet. Additionally there has been only a single teacher or a small group of teachers using Investigations materials at several schools. Because RCSD has not had a full implementation at any school, we do not have data from State or standardized assessments. Ms. Crowley has already shared with the members of Quality Assurance the data from numerous other districts. Notable among that data was Syracuse which implemented last year and realized a significant student achievement rise in the NYS Math 4.

- 4) Consultant Carol Malach indicated that she would provide the customer satisfaction surveys - and the measurement system - in advance of the March QA meeting

Since the February QA meeting, Dr. Rivera has requested some modifications to the surveys, which have resulted in a delay in completing these survey drafts. When these become available, Ms. Jarzyniecki will provide them to the Board.

Next meeting agenda April 26:

Edison redesign status report & grade configuration matrix
7-12 Redesign and status of SWW and 9 go 10 programmatic transfer process
Jump Start overview