

ROCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Policy Review and Development Committee Meeting

April 7, 2016

MINUTES

Attendance

Commissioners – Commissioner Willa Powell (Chair), Commissioner Mary Adams, Commissioner Jose Cruz (5:37PM)

Parent Representative – Barb Van Kerkhove

District Liaison – Charles Johnson (General Counsel and District Liaison)

Presenters/Guests – Linda Cimusz (Interim Superintendent); Dr. Jennifer Gkourlias (Chief of Curriculum and Programs); Dr. Donna Harris (Consultant Research Analyst for Latino Affairs and Bilingual Education)

Board Staff –Mia Johnson

Commissioner Powell called the meeting to order at 5:33PM.

I. Review Minutes of March 10, 2016 Policy Committee Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Powell to approve the minutes of March 10, 2016 Policy Committee Meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Adams. Adopted 2-0 with concurrence from the Parent Representative.

II. Policy Recommendations: Policy 4350: Multicultural/Global Education – Dr. Christiana Otuwa, Dr. Jennifer Gkourlias, and Dr. Donna Harris

Dr. Harris described the policy’s recommended changes and language: reflection of early childhood education by using the term PK-12; language around a positive sense of identity; discussion about how the policy aligns with existing RCSD policies, Common Core, the African American Studies curriculum, and NYS standards; multiple perspectives reflected in curriculum and instructional practices; a policy appendix; removed specific references to secondary schools; added the infusion of this content in all classrooms; and African American and Latino literature would be an expectation and not a mandate.

Commissioner Adams stated that the changes were good and specificity will be developed in practice. Commissioner Cruz concurred that the changes were good.

Commissioner Powell stated that as an action item to cross reference the textbook adoption policy, formatting changes, and adding a policy number. Commissioner Adams asked if there are other cross reference policies and research if there are any existing redundancy.

Ms. VanKerkhove stated that the policy was great and relates to the work of the Community Task Force on School Climate.

Commissioner Cruz suggested adding an annual review of the policy. Commissioner Powell stated that she desired a standard evaluation template documenting what is required. She stated that if the Board wanted to receive a report, then it is up to the members of the Board to make that more specific and if add to the workload of evaluating policies, there is a need to determine which policies may no longer need it. Interim Superintendent Cimusz suggested having the Curriculum Council charged with evaluating this policy. Commissioner Powell stated that she prefers language that charges the Superintendent with evaluating the policy and the Superintendent's regulation could assign the department to conduct the evaluation. She stated that there should be a practice of attaching a regulation. Commissioner Powell asked if the Board should develop particular metrics to measure the policy or should it be at the discretion of the Superintendent. Commissioner Cruz stated that the first step is to create a policy and the second step is to create a section on policy evaluation with the Administration developing the metrics for Board review and approve. He also suggested restructuring the way deliverables are presented at an annual review. Commissioner Adams suggested having the Administration providing feedback on policy deliverable dates.

Dr. Gkourlias stated that she prepared a draft action plan and a SWOT analysis with Dr. Harris to accompany the policy. She stated that the metrics associated with the curriculum development is developed by the Curriculum Council. She agreed that there is a need for policy evaluation, measurements around the entire policy, and identifying internal personnel to complete the evaluation.

Dr. Gkourlias described that they are currently creating the criteria for culturally responsive curriculum development and evaluation, examining ways to fund the curriculum development project, and meeting with Dr. Susan Goodwin of the Rochester Teacher Center. She identified next steps as developing a K-2 curriculum, teacher hiring practices, ongoing professional development, implementation of the Latino Studies course, and gaining input of early childhood education. She stated that the work is connected to the Community Task Force for School Climate's work.

Commissioner Cruz made a motion to advance the full Board as an information item. Vote 3-0 with parent concurrence.

Ms. Van Kerkhove stated that there should be consideration to connecting with local colleges and emphasizing the skills and expertise that teachers need to be hired within the District. She also suggested state level advocacy to include a multicultural perspective in its testing and embedded in high school courses.

Dr. Gkourlias responded that there has been work around recruiting bilingual and English as a New Language teachers at the University of Rochester and Nazareth College. She stated that all current student teachers were exit interviewed and the principals and cooperating teachers were surveyed.

Commissioner Adams inquired about the Innovation Greenhouse having a multicultural knowledge put into practice over the summer and will push for it if financially able. She expressed concern about the lack of operational resources that were invested including Dr. DeGruy's train the trainer work and its failure to see the investment's efficacy. She stated that there needs to be plan for the train the trainer model to ensure efficacy.

Commissioner Cruz described the need to establish adjunct positions as teaching staff and formalizing that process within the District to create the following: speak about experiences, provide practical knowledge, allow students to be reflected in the teacher culturally and racially, provide formal professional development, provide input on curriculum, and provide a unique look into the classroom setting. He expressed interest in being a part of such work. Dr. Gkourlias commended Dr. Harris and her work as a blend of scholarly research and practice. Dr. Harris responded that there is an emergence of work and literature around research practice partnerships to impact students.

III. Review of Current Board Policies with Deliverables – Series 1000: Districtwide

Commissioner Powell stated that as the Policy Committee moves through the Board Policy Manual, this review will determine if deliverables should be added and removed from the Series 1000: Districtwide policies.

Commissioner Adams stated that the School Record policy was not changed online reflecting the changes she worked on previously and was approved. Ms. Van Kerkhove stated that there are two tracks to get to Board Policies and they do not link to the same documents.

Commissioner Powell expressed that her preference is to use Board Doc public library and her goal is to provide a hard copy to each principal, the libraries, and department heads with a sign off.

The following policies and suggestions/changes/comments were discussed and made by the committee:

- Policy 1000: Community Relation Goals
 - No changes/remain as written
- Policy 1100: Public Information Program
 - Commissioner Adams suggested a different type of deliverable because it is a Superintendent driven policy. She suggested that the CIGR Committee has a public conversation with the Superintendent regarding the status.
 - Commissioner Adams suggested changing the deliverable language to “The Superintendent will evaluate the public relations program and advise the Board of recommended modifications and improvements, as needed.”
- Policy 1129: School District Records
 - Commissioner Adams requested that this policy be revisited in May.
- Policy 1130: Media Relations
 - Commissioner Powell asked for the Administration to review and update the regulations, if needed.
- Policy 1140: Public Engagement
 - Commissioner Adams suggested removing old terminology by removing “five design tasks” and replacing with “District priorities.” She also suggested adding “mobile applications” to the policy.
- Policy 1150: Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Schools
 - Mr. Johnson described two schools and issues that emerged with the development of clubs with a religious focus.

- Commissioner Powell stated a need for an internal checklist to ensure that all who inquiries about the policy receives the same information.
- Ms. Van Kerkhove suggested that the policy reflects and includes ESSA.
- Policy 1200: Community Involvement
 - Ms. Van Kerkkove stated that the cross reference should change from “7100” to “7500.”
 - Commissioner Adams stated that there needs to be a series of discussions to define the concept of community schools on a local level.
 - Commissioner Powell stated that the Administration can present before the Board of Education and the public defining a community school. She stated that historically community schools were those that had a recreation center connected to them.
 - Interim Superintendent Cimusz stated that there are four schools moving towards becoming community schools. Commissioner Adams responded that there needs to be a common definition of community schools.
 - Commissioner Powell suggested putting the policy to the side to see how it develops after the presentation/public forum coordinated between the Administration and the CIGR committee. Interim Superintendent Cimusz stated that they are looking to create a position for developing community schools and the Office of School Innovation has been working with schools and the Office of Human Capital Initiative about the job description and qualifications.
- Policy 1205: Recognitions for Accomplishment
 - No changes/remain as written
- Policy 1240: Visitors to the Schools
 - Ms. Van Kerkove suggested adding language that “all visitors to school properties and events will abide by the Code of Conduct” and cross referencing with Policy 5300: Code of Conduct.
 - Commissioner Adams asked about the status of the military recruiters. Mr. Johnson responded that principals should work with communications regarding military recruitment.
- Policy 1240.1: Recruiting in Schools
 - Ms. Van Kerkhove suggested removing “Values Policy” from the first paragraph.
- Policy 1300: security Breach and Notification
 - No changes/remain as written
- Policy 1500: Public Use of School Facilities
 - No changes/remain as written
- Policy 1520: Public conduct on school
 - Commissioner Powell asked if this policy could be repealed and used the Code of Conduct in its place. Mr. Johnson stated that Code of Conduct applies to everyone and the new Code will even apply to field trip.
 - Commissioner Powell suggested renumbering the Code of Conduct to be included in the Series 1000: Districtwide.
- Policy 1530: Smoking on School Premise
 - Commissioner Cruz suggested adding other forms of cigarettes: vaps, vapors, and electronic cigarettes.
- Policy 1810: Gifts to District Officers and Employees

- Commissioner Powell stated this policy has been recently updated with a higher dollar amount.
- No changes/remain as written
- Policy 1900: Parent and Family Engagement Policy
 - Ms. Van Kerkove noted that the regulations are dated before the policy.
 - Commissioner Powell asked for the Administration to review and update the regulations.
 - Commissioner Adams requested the review of new laws (i.e. Every Student Succeeds Act – ESSA) and ensure the policy is in compliance.
- Policy 1925: Interpreters for Hearing Impaired Parents
 - Ms. Van Kerkove noted in the document that there isn't a policy for interpreters for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) parents. Commissioner Powell stated that the policy should be reviewed and expanded to include LEP parents. Commissioner Adams responded that such language should be found in Policy 1900: Parent and Family Engagement Policy.
 - Commissioner Powell suggested adding language that references Policy 1900 for LEP parents.
- Regulation 1940-R: District Computer Password Regulation
 - Commissioner Powell questioned why this regulation is separate from the computer use policy. Mr. Johnson responded that this policy is for a security function.
 - No changes/remain as written
- Policy 1950: Acceptable Use of the District Network
 - Commissioner Powell questioned if this policy is as current as it needs to be. Ms. Johnson raised the concern that students Gmail accounts can be used to communicate with others outside of their teachers and the policy should address Gmail accounts.
 - Commissioner Powell stated that this policy needs to be reviewed by the IT Department.
 - Ms. Van Kerkove suggested adding “gender identity” to the policy.
- Regulations 1960-R: Chargeback to Schools for Electronic Devices
 - Mr. Johnson stated that a current problem is schools taking possession of cell phones and becoming responsible for them; if lost, the school becomes financially responsible for replacing the phone and it comes out of the school's budget.
 - Commissioner Powell suggested adding to the Financial Management section of Board policies due to its financial implications or absorbed in the revised Code of Conduct.

IV. Follow-up Items

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Powell to adjourn. Adopted 3-0 with concurrence from the Parent Representative.

Meeting adjourned at 7:41PM.