

Rochester Board of Education
Policy Committee
October 14, 5:30 p.m.

Minutes

Attendance: Chairman Brennan, Commissioners Elliott (arrived 5:33 p.m.) and Powell; Board Staff L. Dunsmoor; District Staff E. McDonald, G. Pedraza Burgos, N. Crocker, D. Passmore.

Chairman Brennan convened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

1. Motion to approve Minutes of September 16, 2008 by Commissioner Powell. Adopted without objection.

2. Erie 1 Policy Manual update

Commissioner Powell expressed concerns about regulations not keeping up with the policy update; if Erie 1 recommends that something be pulled from Policy and put into Regulations, the Superintendent will have to be prepared to adopt interim regulations during the update process. If the contract is approved at the next Business Meeting, Erie I will have to confirm that the regulations will keep up with Policy removals.

Chairman Brennan noted that there had been some discussion at the previous Board meeting regarding approving the update; he was disappointed that additional Board members were not in attendance.

Commissioner Powell said Board staff will be asked to compile a list of policies that need immediate review and a recommended framework.

3. Chairman Brennan said he was not prepared to discuss a policy regarding Board staff not being able to move directly from Board staff to District staff.

4. Parent Involvement Policy

Chairman Brennan said he hears the same recurring information – that parent reps are not selected by parents but by principals and that parent reps are sometimes treated with disrespect. He requested an accounting to this point as to which schools have elected parent reps in place. Mr. Passmore said he could provide the report. Ms. Burgos said the data indicates that most parents are pleased with the Policy but not the implementation. She and Ms. Crocker are working on a personal approach to getting things done. Ms. Crocker said the structure is being put into place for a district-wide parent advisory council. Parents and community members have had a great deal of input and support the process. They are working on an elections process to have the new group in place for January 1. Chairman Brennan said he wants to see a large outreach for the elections process, not a selective outreach. Commissioner Elliott said that some parents' contributions express deep concern for children and the community; they must not be marginalized for being vocal. Parent must be educated about union contracts so that they have a voice in the process. Commissioner Powell said that parent input into negotiations need to be collected now, during the initial negotiations process. Commissioner Elliott said she is offended by union signs she sees and that parent involvement needs to be redefined to reflect a parent's job of getting the child to school on time, making sure the child sleeps at night, eats right, and that the child's homework is done. Not every parent has the time to attend PTA or SBPT meetings, or even parent conferences that take place at 3 p.m. Commissioner Elliott said she would like to see consequences in place for teachers and administrators regarding parent involvement; parents should have a voice in the evaluation. Ms. Crocker said parent engagement will be forwarded as an educational classroom strategy. Ms. Burgos said there will be training for staff that is similar to training offered for parents that helps parents learn "Demand Parent" strategies regarding their rights. Ms. Crocker distributed the Parent Advisory Council draft model.

DRAFT: Not approved by Committee

5. Next meeting: Early November, tbd.

6. Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Powell. Second by Commissioner Elliott. Adopted at 6:34 p.m.