

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

January 18, 2007

7:00 p.m.

Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science & Technology

PRESENT: Teneka Frost, President
Wayne Morris, Secretary
Mark Barth
Judy Doesschate
Barbara Gaffuri
Jackie Jenkins-Cox

Dr. Eva Joseph
Terry White
Joseph Dragone
Kathleen Wetmore
Linda Jackson-Chalmers

Absent/Excused: William Barnette, Vice President

Call to Order:

Ms. Frost called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Frost welcomed the members of the audience and thanked them for taking the time to attend the meeting.

Ms. Frost noted Mr. Barnette was recently honored with a Humanitarian Award from Governor Spitzer for his many years of public service throughout his career. Ms. Frost congratulated Mr. Barnette, although he was unable to be present at the meeting this evening.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Joseph reminded everyone of the Referendum Vote on Tuesday, February 6, 2007 from Noon to 9:00 p.m. A newsletter has been mailed to each residence in the City of Albany. Dr. Joseph noted the polling locations are very important because the polling locations for the school district vote are different from the locations for the general election. Additional information related to the vote can be obtained by calling the District Office at 475-6010.

Dr. Joseph advised the District continues its pursuit of charter school reform and charter school aid. Dr. Joseph noted there are an overwhelming number of charter schools in the Albany City School District, more than any other school districts in the State on a per capita basis. The impact of that on the District financially is significant.

Dr. Joseph noted board members have received invitations for a magnet school information session scheduled for Saturday, January 27, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the Montessori Magnet School. Legislators have also been invited to attend this session, focusing on opportunities offered in the district's magnet schools. This session was a tradition in the past that the District is continuing as part of a recruitment process in anticipation of the lottery. An Open house will follow the information session.

Dr. Joseph noted grades 3 through 8 are participating in testing this month in ELA assessments. Dr. Joseph noted last week grades 3 through 5 had their ELA exams with make-ups this week. This week grades 6 through 8 will be tested with make-ups scheduled for next week. Regents Exam will take place next week with the largest number of students participating in mid-year Regents testing.

Dr. Joseph noted February is Black History Month. The District will be hosting a number of celebrations throughout the month, particularly a celebration that will take at Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, February 6, 7 and 8, 2007. Dr. Joseph noted flyers are available for board members and the public related to this program.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Jim Lembo addressed the board regarding the student registration process and the Donors Choose Project.

ROUTINE CONSENT ITEM

Ms. Frost presented for approval Routine Consent Items Resignation/Agreement. Employee Benefits Administrator, the 2007 Board of Education Meeting Schedule and Award of Bid for ERATE applications, including additional information presented this evening. Mr. Morris made a motion for approval. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion. Ms. Doesschate set aside the Award of Bid for ERATE applications.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion absent the item set aside.

Ms. Doesschate made a motion for approval of the award of bid for the ERATE application. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. Following discussion related to the timing of this funding for the Arbor Hill project, Ms. Frost called the question.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion absent the item set aside.

INFORMATION ITEM

District Special Education Review

Dr. Joseph advised this information item is intended to give an overview of the status of the Special Education Program. Dr. Joseph introduced Ms. Deborah Sharpe-DeFries, Director of Special Education. Ms. Sharpe-DeFries presented a comprehensive review of the Special Education Program including the Priority Areas, which include academic achievement, professional development, reduction in classifications and increasing declassifications, Albany High School Focus Review, Reporting on State Performance Indicator 7, which involves the Committee on Pre-School Special Education, Budget Implications, Students with Disabilities in private schools and Supplemental Services to Charter Schools, and Out of District Placements such as BOCES Day Treatment. Dr. Joseph advised the cost and services for the Special Education Program would be reviewed in the budget process.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Policy Review

Ms. Frost presented Policy #1130 News Media Relations for discussion. Ms. Jackson-Chalmers submitted additional text as outlined by the Policy Committee. Following discussion the consensus of the Board was to act on the policy as originally submitted with the agenda for discussion this evening. Ms. Frost advised the policy would be brought forward for action at the next meeting.

Ms. Frost presented Policy #1230 Public Participation at Board Meetings. Ms. Jackson-Chalmers advised this policy incorporates language particularly in the sections regarding the methods of participation from the District website. The procedure noted in the policy is the current procedure in practice. Discussion followed relative to large groups of speakers addressing the same issue and a suggestion that three names of speakers be announced so that speakers are prepared to address the board in a timely manner. Additional discussion also included a suggestion to notify speakers when they have one remaining minute so that are not cut off at the three-minute time period. There was also discussion related to responding to comments at the meetings. Ms. Frost suggested the board would be participating in a workshop on January 30th and that perhaps these issues could be discussed at that time. This policy will be brought forward at the next meeting for action.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Frost advised Dr. Joseph has made a recommendation to eliminate three committees, the Academic, Athletic and Intergovernmental Committees. Following a lengthy discussion, the board was in agreement with the recommendation with the possibility of forming ad hoc committees to address specific issues. Also, the board agreed to designate board representation on the CDEP Committee.

The board discussed changing the time of committee meetings to accommodate board member schedules. Additional discussion followed relative to board representation on the CDP Committee. Mr. Barth and Ms. Doesschate will attend the next meeting after which a decision will be made as to who will serve as the board representative.

Policy Committee

Mrs. Gaffuri noted the Policy Committee is actively meeting, moving forward with policy review. Board Governance policies will be presented to board members for review.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Ms. Doesschate advised she attended the celebration at Thomas O'Brien Academy honoring Martin Luther King. Student essays and performances were excellent, as well as other speakers.

Ms. Doesschate, as liaison for Sheridan Preparatory Academy, invited everyone to the International Festival on February 1st at 6:00 p.m.

Mrs. Gaffuri mentioned the recognition of five Albany High School students who developed three film shorts and entered them in a student film contest, a foreign film festival of sorts. Dr. Joseph noted they won an award and the students are planning to travel to Paris to accept their award at the Student Film Festival. They are raising funds to cover travel expenses with a local premier of their film at the Madison Theatre on Thursday, January 25th with showings at 7:00 p.m. and one at 9:00 p.m. They will be also selling spots at \$50 each.

Adjournment

Mr. Morris made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Jenkins-Cox seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Catherine L. Cutting
Clerk of the Board