

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

April 4, 2006

7:00 p.m.

Albany High School

PRESENT: Edward Brown, President
Teneka Frost, Vice President
Barbara Gaffuri, Secretary
William Barnette
Jackie Jenkins-Cox
Judy Doesschate
Susan Kushner

Dr. Eva Joseph
Jeffrey Honeywell
Terrance White
Joseph Dragone
Kathleen Wetmore
Linda Jackson-Chalmers

Absent: None

Call to Order:

Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Brown welcomed the members of the audience and thanked them for taking the time to attend the meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Joseph made noted of the Gear Up Program, which is a program that the district should be touting more loudly and be very proud of. The district has received a \$3 million grant over the course of the next three years to insure that every 7th grader in the district has the supports necessary to see themselves through not only 7th grade, but all the way through the remainder of their Albany school career to college. Dr. Joseph noted this is a very comprehensive program with a number of activities. Dr. Joseph advised a flyer would be coming forward in the near future.

Dr. Joseph noted the board would be discussing two important agenda items this evening, the reassignment of Philip Livingston Magnet Academy (PLMA) and the 2006-07 School Budget. Dr. Joseph extended her appreciation to the many parents and members of the public who have attended the recent meetings and provided important feedback regarding the reassignment.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

The student representative was not present. There was no report.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

1. Surriane Thomas addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.
2. John Robinson addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.
3. Beverly Pagett addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.

4. Donna Young addressed the board regarding the Dual Language Program.
5. Marlin Anderson addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.
6. Lisa Turnello addressed the board regarding the facilities plan.
7. Lorraine Favors addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.
8. Kathy Neuffer addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.
9. Georgia Sullivan addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.
10. Henry Linett addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.

Mr. Brown advised the time allotted for public comment has expired. Mr. Barnett made a motion to extend the time for 30 minutes. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

11. Robert Callahan addressed the board regarding the proposed budget figures and the reassignment of PLMA students.
12. Mark Mishler addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students and the grade changes that would result from that change.
13. Sally D'Agostino addressed the board regarding the facilities plan, the budget and the reassignment of PLMA students.
14. Annette DeLavallade addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.
15. Ann Dorhamer addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.
16. Bill Ritchie addressed the board regarding the concerns of teachers at PLMA.
17. Leroy Graham addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students and the involvement of parents in the decision making process.
18. Anne Pope addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.
19. Larry Frank addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students and the budget.
20. Tara McLaughlin addressed the board regarding the reassignment of PLMA students.

ROUTINE CONSENT ITEMS

Mr. Brown presented Routine Consent Items including Proceedings of Meetings for March 7, 16, 21 and 28, 2006; Retirements/Resignations, Terminations, Leaves of Absence, Transfers, Appointments (Administrative Appointment, Probationary Appointment Extensions, Probationary Appointments, Regular Substitutes, Miscellaneous, Albany High Evening School, Civil Service, Emergency Conditional Appointments), Attendance at Conferences, Treasurer's Report, Central Treasurer's Report for Extra Classroom Activity Fund, Budget Transfers under \$10,000, Budget Transfers over \$10,000, Budget Status Report, Award of Bids, Real Property Tax Adjustments, Extracurricular Activity Clubs Approvals for Terminated Clubs), Committee on Special Education, Subcommittee on Special Education, Committee on Pre-K Special Education, Memoranda of Understanding (Albany NAACP Student Theater Outreach Program, Albany Citizens Council on Alcoholism and other Chemical Dependencies, Albany City Council PTA, Capital Region Sponsor-A-Scholar, Inc., City of Albany, Dept. of Youth and Workforces Services AmeriCorps School Success Program, Family and Children Services of the Capital Region, Footsteps Fine Arts Education Program, St. Anne's Institute, Two Together, Inc.) Contracts for Grants and Special Projects (Catapult Online, LLC., National Urban Alliance, School Safety Consultant). Mr. Brown noted there was an addition to the Resignation listing that

includes an agreement dated March 24, 2006 authorizing the President of the Board and the Superintendent of Schools to execute on behalf of the School District. Ms. Frost made a motion to approve the routine consent items as listed. Ms. Jackie Jenkins-Cox seconded the motion.

Mrs. Gaffuri set aside the St. Anne's Institute Memorandum of Understanding. Ms. Frost requested that the Minutes of March 16, 2006 and the National Urban Alliance contract be set aside, also under Memoranda of Understanding. Mr. Barnette set aside Extra Curricular Activity Clubs. Ms. Doesschate set aside the entire group of Memoranda of Understanding. Mr. Honeywell noted the addition under resignations being presented this evening with a related agreement dated March 24, 2006 authorizing the President of the Board and the Superintendent to execute that agreement.

The board voted unanimously to approve Routine Consent Items absent those items set aside.

Mr. Brown presented the Minutes of March 16, 2006 for discussion. Ms. Frost indicated a correction on page 2 under Facilities Project Report the name of Mr. Brown should be changed to Ms. Frost. Ms. Frost made a motion to approve the proceedings as corrected. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Brown presented the Extra Curricular Activity Clubs for discussion. Discussion followed relative to efforts to keep these clubs functional in terms of stimulating students to participate in clubs. Ms. Frost made a motion for approval. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion.

The board voted 5 ayes, 1 opposed and 1 abstention.

Mr. Barnette was opposed and Ms. Frost abstained.

Mr. Brown presented the listing of Memoranda of Understanding for discussion. Ms. Doesschate made a motion to approve the listing with the exception of St. Anne's Institute, previously set aside. Ms. Frost seconded the motion. Ms. Doesschate highlighted the fact that the district funds a number of activities. Dr. Joseph noted through a number of grants and funding opportunities the district is able to support and maintain long-standing partnerships the district has established. Dr. Joseph noted some of the programs have been in existence for many years.

The board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Brown presented the St. Anne's Institute Memorandum of Understanding for discussion. Ms. Doesschate made a motion for approval. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion. Mrs. Gaffuri noted she is an employee of St. Anne's and would not be voting on the motion.

The board voted 6 ayes, 0 opposed and 1 abstention. Mrs. Gaffuri abstained.

Mr. Brown presented the National Urban Alliance contract for discussion. Ms. Frost made a motion for approval. Mrs. Doesschate seconded the motion. Discussion followed relative to specific goals of the contract, the action plan for the district, the outcome of the services and what kind of recommendations would be coming to the board in terms of instituting policies that will insure that the district is taking advantage of the monies being spent on the contract. Mr. Barnette also expressed concern that events have already been scheduled with this group, absent board approval of the contract. Dr. Joseph noted that conversations with the Executive Director indicated that the board had not yet approved the contract and should there not be board

approval, the Executive Director would be advised. Dr. Joseph noted there was no assumption that there would be an approval or that the district would move forward. Following a lengthy discussion, Ms. Frost withdrew the motion and moved to withdraw the motion and table the item. The second to the motion, Ms. Doesschate, did not agree. Motion stands. Following additional discussion, Ms. Kushner called the question.

The board voted 5 ayes, 0 nays and 2 abstained. Mr. Barnette and Ms. Jenkins-Cox abstained

FACILITIES PROJECT REPORT

Action Items Related to the Facilities Project

Approval of Change Orders

Dr. Joseph presented change orders for Stephen & Harriet Myers Middle School, North Albany Academy, School 16, and Eagle Point Elementary School. Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion for approval. Ms. Jenkins-Cox seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Award of Hackett Contracts

Mr. Brown presented the contract for alterations at Hackett Middle School for discussion. Mr. Hamlin advised March 7th the district had a successful bid. The general construction contract went to Sano-Rubin as low bidder, Mechanical - T. Lemme, Plumbing – Collett Mechanical and Electrical – Harold R. Clune. Bid award totals \$20,285,390. Mr. Hamlin noted the expectation is that this project will included the highest number of MWBE participants in the facilities plan. Ms. Frost made a motion for approval. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

ACTION ITEMS

2006-2007 School Calendar

Mr. Brown presented the 2006-2007 School Calendar for approval. Ms. Jenkins-Cox made a motion for approval. Ms. Frost seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Resolution Authorizing Exemption on Property Taxes

Mr. Brown presented the following a resolution to authorize exemptions on property taxes for persons deployed by the military.

RESOLUTION

Military Exemption

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the Albany City School District hereby enacts the following in regard to the extension of payment of real property taxes for persons deployed by the military:

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of the Albany City School District recognizes that the individuals who are members of the military make a tremendous sacrifice, especially in times like these when our military personnel are in many locations throughout the world and here in New York fighting against terrorism. This sacrifice is just as real for the men and women who comprise our reserve armed forces and state organized militia. Such military personnel continue to be responsible for their own well-being and the well-being of their families and they must still face the obligations that exist in their everyday lives. Military personnel engaged in active duty

should not be troubled by their obligations at home.

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, pursuant to the authority granted in Real Property Tax Law Section 925-d, notwithstanding any other provision of law which relates to the collection of real property tax owed or to the imposition of penalties or interest therefor for a late payment owed by a person who has been deployed by the military or by the spouse or domestic partner of such person for real property of a person so deployed, any deadline with respect to the payment of such real property tax shall be extended for a period of ninety days after the end of such deployment. For purposes of this benefit a "person deployed by the military" shall mean a person who has been ordered to active military duty, other than training, for the period beginning with a declaration of war by Congress and ending with a date prescribed by Presidential proclamation or concurrent resolution of Congress or during any periods of combat designated by presidential executive order or hazardous duty. Any payment on behalf of such deployed person, spouse or domestic partner from a real property tax escrow account shall likewise be so extended consistent with the provisions of this section.

This resolution shall be retroactive to be effective for school tax payments due for affected members of the military in September 2005 and shall be effective prospectively until such time as it is amended or rescinded.

Mr. Barnette made a motion for approval. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion. Dr. Joseph noted this resolution allows the district to provide consideration to our service men and women who are serving military duty. It allows the district to grant them a delay in paying their taxes while they serve on duty without any penalty. Dr. Joseph noted the resolution dated back to September 2005.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

DISCUSSION ITEM

Reassignment of Philip Livingston Magnet Academy (PLMA)

Dr. Joseph noted reassignment of students from any school certainly is a difficult conversation. Dr. Joseph also noted that a conversation like this should not be put forward with the budget as was pointed out at the last meeting. Dr. Joseph noted the district has a budget timeline and there are some considerations, which is why the district is moving more quickly. Several meetings have taken place in the community with parents, community members and some board members. Dr. Joseph spoke about school leadership, school climate, Achievement, School Safety, reduced enrollment at the middle school level and change in the facilities plan. Dr. Joseph reviewed enrollment projections and issues and concerns expressed by parents and community members on March 30th, 31st and April 3rd along with considerations such as school, program and achievement improvements and budget. Following a lengthy discussion, Mr. Brown advised additional information would be necessary in order for board members to make an informed decision relative to this issue. Mr. Brown advised additional discussion of this issue would be scheduled at a future meeting.

2006-2007 Budget Development

Dr. Joseph noted the district is at the point where information presented over a number of budget sessions is being presented with a prospective of the total picture. Ms. Wetmore gave a presentation of budget figures that include charter school projected enrollment. Ms. Wetmore noted per pupil costs for students in charter schools has increased 8.55% over 2005-2006 from

\$9,328 to \$10,126. Total cost of charter school enrollment has increased \$357,058 to \$16,551,776. Ms. Wetmore noted there was a reduction in the RAN and TAN interest costs, which provided a savings in interest expense of \$129,312. Ms. Wetmore noted the inclusion of the ELA program in the budget totaling \$387,300. The net increase in the proposed budget is \$615,046. Ms. Wetmore advised the revised budget totals \$169,350,932, which shows a budget increase of \$12,313,300 or 7.84% increase. The tax levy increase for this additional amount is 13.34%, up from the 12.66% previously presented. Ms. Wetmore reviewed the estimated contingency budget, which reflects the contingency budget figure of \$168,373,960, a difference of \$976,972 from the budget figure and the contingency figure. Ms. Wetmore also reviewed items that must be excluded with a contingency budget such as student supplies, equipment and ineligible raises.

Ms. Wetmore reviewed budget reductions and additions discussed at the last meeting. Ms. Wetmore also reviewed a state aid comparison listing. Potential additional state aid based on the legislative proposal is \$4,548,725 and Magnet aid pending federal approval is \$1,500,000. Dr. Joseph noted absent a state adopted budget there are still questions about the final figures in terms of the district's application. Following discussion of budget reductions and budget additions, Mr. Brown clarified that the general consensus of the board is to include the foreign language program, elementary summer school and the additional teacher for the Dual Language Program. Additional discussion would take place at the next meeting scheduled for Monday, April 10, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. Dr. Joseph noted the administration will take into consideration comments relative to what should be included in the budget in conjunction with any additional information relative to state aid.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Donna Potterfield addressed the board relative to giving the public a comparison of public schools and charter schools.

Adjournment

Ms. Doesschate made a motion to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 a.m.

Catherine L. Cutting
Clerk of the Board