

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

June 15, 2006

Philip J. Schuyler Achievement Academy

7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Edward Brown, President
Teneka Frost, Vice President
Barbara Gaffuri, Secretary
William Barnette
Judy Doesschate
Susan Kushner
Dr. Eva Joseph
Terrance White
Kathleen Wetmore
Joseph Dragone
Linda Jackson-Chalmers
Chris Langois - Counsel

ABSENT: Jackie Jenkins-Cox

Call to Order:

Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Joseph noted the budget re-vote is scheduled for Tuesday, June 20, 2006. Dr. Joseph noted in communications relative to the budget, the question most often asked is what is the difference between the adopted budget at 7.09% and a contingency budget at 7.09%? Dr. Joseph noted the major difference is the benefit the district has with an adopted budget as opposed to the restrictions imposed with a contingency budget. Dr. Joseph noted a contingency budget would not allow for the purchase of student supplies or equipment. It would also require the district to charge community groups for the use of school facilities and it would restrict salary increase for a number of employees who are not included in a collective bargaining unit. Dr. Joseph noted there is a listing available to the public regarding these restrictions. Dr. Joseph also noted information relative to voting locations is also available to the public this evening.

Dr. Joseph advised commencement activities for Albany High School would take place on Sunday, June 25, 2006 at the RAC at SUNY.

Dr. Joseph noted newly elected board members Mrs. Barbara Gaffuri, Ms. Judy Doesschate and Ms. Jackie Jenkins-Cox have each completed a Fiscal Training Workshop as required.

Dr. Joseph introduced Ms. Kathleen Ryan, as the new Director of Health Education and Athletics, who is to be appointed this evening.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The following individuals addressed the board relative to their concerns about the future of the marching band:

George Spencer	Bill Washburn	Shila Rivera
Renee Suber	Eli Washburn	Kevin Higdon
Allison Joel	Bernice Rivera	Yulanda Redmond

ROUTINE CONSENT ITEMS

Mr. Brown presented the following routine consent items for approval: Health Contracts (Averill Park), Appointments and Management Confidential Contracts. Mr. Brown advised the Management Confidential Contracts have been tabled. Ms. Doesschate made a motion for approval Routine Consent Items absent the tabled item. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Middle School Restructuring

Dr. Joseph noted board members received information in the agenda materials regarding the restructuring plans for Philip Livingston Magnet Academy (PLMA) and William S. Hackett Middle School (WSHMS). Dr. Joseph noted these are schools of corrective action in year two and there are certain requirements on the continuum in terms of the accountability status for the State Education Department (SED). Dr. Joseph noted Mr. Dragone would give a presentation on this item for discussion with formal adoption to be scheduled on the August agenda. Dr. Joseph noted the district would receive technical feedback from the SED, which would be taken into consideration in developing the best plan, with all of the necessary collaboration.

Mr. Dragone noted both PLMA and WSHMS are in corrective action year two in the area of English, Language, Arts (ELA), which is the designation for this current year 2005-2006. As part of a requirement process, schools in corrective action year two have to draft a restructuring plan. Mr. Dragone noted last year, in recognizing the district's facility project and the inherent opportunity for restructuring, the district submitted a restructuring plan one year ahead of schedule. The plan focused on infrastructure and restructuring with new schools, a new curriculum developed for ELA, new pacing maps for all core content areas and the new organizational structure focused on creating building leadership teams and other infrastructure pieces for implementation of further steps.

Mr. Dragone spoke about the implementation of a middle level education task force involving district administrators, building administrators, teachers, parents, regional partners (School Support Services Network, Regional School Support Center and Special Education Training and Resource Center) and representatives from SED; the task force identified areas of concern and identified communication, instruction and building community as three areas of focus. The Comprehensive Education Plans (CEP) would operationalize the 2006-2007 restructuring plan at the building level and the task force would be the main monitoring structure for implementation and accountability. Mr. Dragone reviewed and organizational model and monitoring expectations, identifying responsibilities of the building level leadership team, faculty and staff. Mr. Dragone noted evaluation and assessment would also be a part of the plan.

Mr. Dragone advised it is important to recognize that this plan was drafted collaboratively with all the entities that are sanctioned by SED that the district is required to have relationships with and they are charged with working with the district to develop a successful plan.

Following a lengthy discussion that included the importance of communication, increased focus on risk factors and the level of support in the buildings as the plan is rolled out, Mr. Dragone noted the final plan would be brought forward to the board for recommendations prior to the plan being presented for approval at the August board meeting.

Workers' Compensation Consulting Contract Extension

Ms. Wetmore presented a contract extension for RMSCO, the firm that manages the district's workers' compensation matters. Ms. Wetmore advised the district has been contracting with RMSCO since 1994. The increase to the contract is 4%, which appears to be reasonable based on a market value of services. Ms. Wetmore advised the contract would be brought forward at the next meeting for approval. Discussion followed relative to the issue of competitive bidding process to contracts. Mr. Brown advised this issue would be brought forward to the Policy Committee.

Resolution to Approve State Aid Advance

Ms. Wetmore presented the following resolution for discussion and action.

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE STATE AID ADVANCE
PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 57 OF THE LAWS OF 2005**

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education of the City School District of Albany Approve the filing of an application and claim for an apportionment pursuant to Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2005. The purpose of the advance is to fund the retirement system accruals pursuant to GASB Technical Bulletin 2004-2. The apportionment claimed may not exceed the apportionment claimed in the 2004-2005 school year.

Ms. Wetmore advised it is necessary for the board to act on this item this evening. The resolution allows for the advance in state aid and the application needs to be filed before June 30, 2006. Ms. Wetmore noted the legislation was changed recently from a two-year pay back to a five-year pay back for the TRS advance the district took last year. This puts the district on a five-year pay back plan.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to amend the agenda to act on this resolution. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

Ms. Doesschate made a motion to approve the motion to approve the resolution. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

Naming of School 16

Dr. Joseph presented the recommendation for the naming of School 16. Dr. Joseph noted after careful consideration with community members, former students, parents, current students, teachers and various stakeholder, four names have been presented to the superintendent for consideration. Dr. Joseph advised the name of Pine Hills Elementary School is being recommended for board approval on July 5, 2006. Following discussion, Mr. Brown advised this item would be on the July 5, 2006 agenda for action.

ACTION ITEM

National Urban Alliance Contract

Dr. Joseph advised this item is being presented for approval this evening. The board had extensive discussion related to this contract at the last board meeting, which results in two adjustments to the contract. One is the inclusion of the work with the district's professional development planning team as well as the specification of 10 pro bono days in the contract. Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion for approval. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion. Following discussion, Mr. Brown called the vote.

The board voted 5 ayes and 1 opposed. Mr. Barnette was opposed.

High School Foreign Language Textbook Adoption

Dr. Joseph noted the board had a presentation at the last board meeting on the textbooks being presented for approval this evening. Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve the textbooks as presented. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.

The board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Doesschate advised the Academic Committee met and has created a laundry list of issues that might be appropriate for the Academic Committee to review. The list has been prioritized and narrowed down. Ms. Doesschate advised, with Mr. Dragone and Mr. White's assistance, the Academic Committee will be looking at issues regarding procedures for suspensions to insure that students who are have been suspended are keeping up with school work. Other issues are honors placement policies, community and parental involvement. Discussion followed relative to how these issues would be brought forward on a board agenda. Mr. Brown advised issues would be presented to the board when the committee determines it is appropriate.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Mrs. Gaffuri advised she attended the Athletic Award and Senior Award ceremonies, both of which were very enjoyable and inspiring. Mrs. Gaffuri noted there is a lot to be proud of in this district. Mrs. Gaffuri noted that families offering the scholarships were present for the award of scholarships. The recipient gets to meet the family who is sponsoring the scholarship and that was very intimate.

Ms. Kushner noted she would be doing something special for the students graduating from Harriett Gibbons in recognition of the fact that these students have had to overcome a number of challenges in their lives. Ms. Kushner noted that if other board members are interested in being involved in this effort they should contact Ms. Kushner.

Ms. Kushner clarified the process of distributing diplomas at the high school graduation. Dr. Joseph advised that board members would be distributing diplomas to individual students to whom they would like to personally present their diplomas.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Barnette made a motion to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Catherine L. Cutting
Clerk of the Board