

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

November 17, 2005

Stephen & Harriet Myers Middle School

7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Edward Brown, President
Susan Kushner, Vice President
Teneka Frost, Secretary
Judy Doesschate
Patricia Fahy
Barbara Gaffuri
Dr. Eva Joseph
Terrance White
Kathleen Wetmore
Joseph Dragone
Linda Jackson-Chalmers
Minsoo Lee

ABSENT: William Barnette

Call to Order:

Mr. Brown called the meeting to order at 7:00 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.

Mr. Brown advised the Board would seek approval of a resolution appointing Ms. Judy Doesschate to the vacant position on the Board. Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION

BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENT

IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT, pursuant to the authority contained in Education Law Section 2502, the Board of Education of the City School District of Albany hereby appoints Judy Doesschate to the vacant position on the Board of Education created by the resignation of Scott Wexler for the period from November 17, 2005 to and including December 31, 2005.

Ms. Fahy seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the resolution.

Mr. Brown administered the Oath of Office to Ms. Doesschate. Board Members congratulated Ms. Doesschate on her appointment.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Joseph offered congratulations to Ms. Doesschate. Dr. Joseph thanked the students for the presentation conducted prior to the Board Meeting this evening. Dr. Joseph noted there were a number of activities that took place throughout the District this week in recognition of American Education Week recognizing efforts, programs and opportunities available to students in public education. The week concludes with report card pick-up tomorrow, Friday, November 18, 2005 for students in kindergarten through grade 6 at the elementary schools and kindergarten through grade 8 at North Albany Academy. These students will have a half-day session. Dr. Joseph reminded all parents to please pick up reports cards and spend a few minutes talking about the children's progress with the teachers.

Dr. Joseph also noted school related professional recognition day is tomorrow. The District will internally recognize and appreciate our support personnel (Operations & Maintenance, Teaching Assistants, Teacher Aides, Food Service Staff and Clerical Personnel) who help the administration keep schools up and running on a regular basis.

Dr. Joseph also extended best wishes to everyone for the Thanksgiving Day Holiday and noted the significant events scheduled for the weekend of November 26 and 27 with the recognition ceremony of the scholar athlete 2001 graduates from Albany High School and the CDPHP basketball tournament at the Pepsi Arena. Dr. Joseph encouraged everyone to participate in these two activities.

Dr. Joseph spoke to the incident at Albany High School earlier this date. Dr. Joseph assured the community and the families that often times the District finds it necessary to take rigorous steps to insure, as a precautionary measure, the safety of all students. There was a lockdown situation at the high school today in response to a situation so that it could be best controlled. Dr. Joseph noted the school returned to normal activity and a normal day of activities is anticipated for tomorrow.

Mr. Brown thanked the superintendent and staff for the various events that took place throughout the week in recognition of American Education Week. Mr. Brown advised he attended all of the events and found them very informative.

Ms. Fahy asked for information about the timeline for the middle school enrollment information. Dr. Joseph advised a meeting is scheduled for tomorrow to discuss that plan. Dr. Joseph advised the plan is not taking the same form that had originally been discussed in that the District wants to be sure that the District is doing the right thing by all students. Dr. Joseph noted December 1st is the projected date that this information will be available.

Ms. Fahy asked for clarification on the \$17,000 cost per pupil in the District that was used in a flyer used by some school board candidates during the recent election campaign. Dr. Joseph noted this figure is not correct. Calculation of this figure is not simply dividing the total budget figure by the number of students. Ms. Wetmore advised this figure is devised through a very complex formula that takes into consideration costs for services to students at private, parochial, charter school students, incarcerated students and homebound students who are not enrolled in District schools. The State Education approved calculation expense per pupil in 2003-2004, which is used for operating aid this year is \$8,244, with the State average at \$8,500. Ms. Wetmore noted the District is well below the State average. Ms. Fahy noted the more these corrected figures could be brought to public attention, the better.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Joanne McElroy Moore addressed the Board relative to budget goals and the Board appointment.
2. John Cutro addressed the Board regarding school safety and youth violence conferencing.
3. Annette DeLavallade addressed the Board regarding parent involvement.
4. Rose Guerrero addressed the Board regarding the incident at Albany High School.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Dr. Joseph advised Ms. Anita Murphy, Director of Testing and Assessment would be presenting information to the Board as a pre-cursor to the conversations the Board will have about programs as it moves through the budget development process in terms of responsibility and accountability. Dr. Joseph advised the Assistant Superintendents for Instruction and Ms. Murphy worked together to consolidate a vast amount of performance and achievement information related to how student achievement in the District.

Ms. Murphy gave a very comprehensive presentation including state and federal accountability, changes in SED regulations based on No Child Left Behind legislation, changes in testing for the 2005-2006 school year, performance index targets, information related to elementary, middle schools and the high school and the implications for planning in each of these programs and system for accountability and concerns for the future in the programs. The presentation continued with information related to trend data, graduation rates, a breakdown of the types of diplomas that are awarded and new high school regulations related to the Regents Examinations and graduation requirements. Ms. Murphy also spoke about the Special Education Program and changes in the 405 Citation and planning.

ACTION ITEM

Dr. Joseph presented revised budget goals, based on discussion at the last Board Meeting. Following a lengthy Ms. Kushner made a motion to include a sixth goal "Continue to seek additional state aid and reduce the financial impact of charter schools on the Albany City School District". Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.

The Board voted 5 ayes and 1 abstention. Ms. Frost abstained.

Ms. Fahy made a motion to approve the 2006-2007 Budget Goals as revised. Ms. Doesschate seconded the motion.

City School District of Albany
2006-2007 Budget Development Goals

1. All Schools will meet and exceed New York State Education Standards.
2. The "achievement gap" will be eliminated while maintaining academic challenges for all students at all academic levels.
3. Successful smaller learning communities, including alternative education programs, will be established at the middle and high school levels.
4. Safe schools and student health will remain a priority.
5. Continue to rebuild Albany schools including meeting facility plan targets.
6. Continue to seek additional state aid and reduce the financial impact of Charter Schools on the Albany City School District.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

FACILITIES PROJECT REPORT

Discussion Item

Adoption of (FEIS) for the High School and Athletic Master Plan

Mr. Gifford advised the Final Environmental Impact Statement has a two-piece component. Mr. Gifford advised the Board is being asked to adopt the Final Environmental Impact Statement this evening. Mr. Gifford advised from this the District will be developing a Statement of Findings, which will be presented to the Board at the December Board Meeting for approval. Board approval at that time concludes the SEQR process on both the High School and the Athletic Master Plan. Mr. Gifford advised the materials presented to the Board are extremely brief, due to the fact that there was no attendance at the public hearing and there were no comments from the public, local or State agencies on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Mr. Gifford advised with no comments there is nothing to be addressed. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement stands as a document of record. The Statement of Findings will reflect the conclusions and alternatives contained in the DEIS. Following a brief discussion, Ms. Kushner made a motion for approval. Ms. Frost seconded the motion.

The Board voted 5 ayes, and 1 abstention. Ms. Doesschate abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Cutro addressed the Board relative to response to violence in the City.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Intergovernmental Committee

Ms. Fahy advised the Intergovernmental Committee meeting last week was focused on charter schools. APSTA provided a briefing relative to efforts by NYSUT to address concerns about funding. Signature cards will be available for people to express their concerns regarding charter school funding. Ms. Fahy advised there are concerns relative to whether the cards would be addressed to the Mayor or to the Legislature. Presently cards are addressed to the Mayor, however, people have commented that the cards should be directed to the Legislature because it is legislation that the group hopes to change. Ms. Fahy noted APSTA and NYSUT are to be commended in terms of trying to draw attention to this very serious issue. Ms. Fahy also noted these two groups have offered to do an ad campaign relative too charter school funding and its impact on public education.

Ms. Fahy noted the group would be looking at a series of steps related to the charter schools in terms of developing some legislative strategies in terms of what the District would like, should their be a change in legislation.

Ms. Fahy noted the Academic Committee and Facilities Committee meetings were cancelled.

Policy Committee

Mrs. Gaffuri advised the Policy Committee, she along with Messrs. Barnette and Brown, Ms. Linda Jackson-Chalmers and Ms. Cutting met on November 7, 2005 with consultants from the New York State School Boards Association to discuss the process for policy review. The District policies will be recoded to conform to policies set forth by NYSSBA. The review will begin with Governance Policies. The process will include review by the Superintendent and the Committee, at which point they will be presented to the Board for approval. The Board will need to develop a format for presenting policies for approval, perhaps a block of time on each agenda as we go through the review process.

Mrs. Gaffuri noted the Athletic Committee did not meet.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Frost made a motion to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Catherine L. Cutting
Clerk of the Board