

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

February 7, 2006

7:00 p.m.

Albany High School

PRESENT: Edward Brown, President
Teneka Frost, Vice President
Barbara Gaffuri, Secretary
William Barnette
Judy Doesschate
Jackie Jenkins-Cox
Susan Kushner (left at 8:00 p.m.)

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 asked for a moment of silence in memory of Coretta Scott King. Mr. Brown welcomed the members of the audience and thanked them for taking the time to attend the meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Joseph noted February is Black History Month and there are a number of events taking place throughout the district, including a celebration on February 28, 2006 at Myers Middle School in conjunction with the opening of the new auditorium at that school. Dr. Joseph also mentioned the Rosa Parks Memorial project, sponsored by Citizen's Bank and CDTA. The project is a memorial seat on a CDTA bus that will travel around to sites. Students from Philip Livingston Magnet Academy will be participating in the kick-off for the memorial project.

Dr. Joseph noted the issue of youth and safety is not an agenda item. Noting that there were a number of teachers in the audience, Dr. Joseph advised the District is aggressively addressing the safety issue on multiple fronts with two initiatives where the District has actively involved teachers. Dr. Joseph noted the Youth Safety Task Force membership includes Mr. Bill Ritchie, President of APSTA, along with Cathy Corbo from Philip Livingston Magnet Academy. Dr. Joseph also noted School Safety Committees would be established at each school with a key principle of having a forum so that the people who reside in and work in a school have an opportunity to collaborate about strategies to school safety. Dr. Joseph noted the Youth Safety Task Force met last week, with participation of 22 community leaders, joined by teachers, administrators and students whose focus is on youth safety. Dr. Joseph noted she is talking to Police Chief Tuffey on almost a daily basis about the District's collaboration with the Albany Police. Dr. Joseph noted that the District is also exploring ways that other school districts, similar to Albany, have dealt with safety challenges and have been successful. Dr. Joseph advised the District works daily to improve the safety in every school in the district. Dr. Joseph noted she is confident that with the support of Chief Tuffey, the Youth Safety Task Force and certainly, all those present this evening, that the district can work collaboratively with community leaders, and that the district will succeed in assuring safe, orderly schools and the safety and well-being of the youth in the community.

Dr. Joseph advised the City Council PTA Founders Day Dinner would take place on Friday, February 10, 2006 at the Marriott. Dr. Joseph noted that this is the time that the City Council PTA recognizes many of the school volunteers, district employees and community members for the fine work that they do for our students.

Dr. Joseph introduced and welcomed Ms. Druis Beasley, who joined the District on Monday in the position of Grant Writer.

In response to a request for information related to an alternative education program, Dr. Joseph noted there are a number of strategies that come into play in insuring that there is a safe and orderly environment for students. One of those is insuring that if students have needs that go beyond what can be accommodated, whether they are behavioral or social, that the District will provide alternative options for them. Dr. Joseph advised that while District continues to focus and strengthen existing alternative education programs, the District has pursued establishing alternative sites for off-site classes as an alternative option for students who may have needs that can be better met outside of the school environment. Dr. Joseph noted that several members of the administration have been collaborating about the nature and the form of these programs.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

1. Robert Malerba addressed the Board relative to the middle school swing space plan.
2. Mark Mishler addressed the Board relative to the middle school swing space plan.
3. Susan Paultre addressed the Board relative to school safety at Philip Livingston Magnet Academy.
4. Robert Toussaint addressed the Board relative to school buildings being destroyed in the facilities plan.
5. Bill Ritchie addressed the Board relative to the staff retirements effective this June and the Youth Safety Task Force.
6. Pat Ryan addressed the Board relative to safety issues in elementary schools.
7. John Amidon addressed the Board relative to accurate recruitment information available to students and the availability of the brochure "Do You Know Enough" for distribution in the high school.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

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

ROUTINE CONSENT ITEMS

Mr. Brown presented Routine Consent Items including Proceedings of Meetings for January 3, 2006 and January 19, 2006, Retirements/Resignations, Termination, Vacated Position, Leaves of Absence, Transfers, Appointments (Probationary Teachers, Regular Substitutes, Miscellaneous, Coaching (Winter 2005-2006), 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, Real Property Tax Adjustments, Award of Bids, RFPs, Committee on Special Education, Subcommittee on Special Education, Committee on Pre-K Special Education and Contracts for Grants and Special Projects. Ms. Kushner made a motion to approve the routine consent items as listed. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.

Ms. Cutting noted a correction to the proceedings of January 3, 2006, under the election of officers. There was not call for opposing votes to the nomination of Ms. Kushner, Mr. Brown or Ms. Frost. Therefore, the statement of those opposed should be removed from the vote for Ms. Kushner. Mr. Brown and Ms. Frost. Proceedings will be adjusted accordingly.

Mr. Barnette set aside Retirements/Resignation and Contract for Grants and Special Project.

The Board voted unanimously to approve routine consent items absent those set aside.

Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve the Retirement/Resignations. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion. Following discussion of the financial impact of these retirements, Mr. Brown called the vote.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the item.

Ms. Kushner left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve to approve the NYGEAR UP grant. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion. Dr. Joseph noted the grant is a \$3.5 million project targeted for every 7th grade student in the District to receive supports from 7th grade through high school from a number of venues and support services to promote and insure every student's participation in college. Support services will also be offered to families to assist them in understanding that college is attainable for their children.

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

FACILITIES PROJECT REPORT

Action Items Related to the Facilities Project

Approval of Change Orders

Dr. Joseph presented change orders for Myers Middle School, Montessori Magnet Academy, North Albany Academy, Eagle Point Elementary School, School 18 and Schuyler Achievement Academy for approval. Ms. Doesschate made a motion for approval. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion. Following discussion, Mr. Gifford advised funds to cover change orders come from the budgeted amount for each projects. These are not additional monies over the project budget.

The Board voted unanimously (6 – 0) to approve the motion.

Collins & Scoville Architects Agreement

Mr. Brown presented the Collins & Scoville Agreement for design services for School 19 based on a revised median budget for approval. Ms. Jackie Jenkins-Cox made a motion to approve the agreement. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion. Mr. Gifford advised this is a standard form architect agreement negotiated with Collins & Scoville. Mr. Gifford advised with all the architect agreements, the District has established a fee schedule for the various jobs, which includes design furniture, fixture and equipment. Mr. Gifford advised the agreement is similar to previous agreements the Board has approved to date. Following discussion Mr. Brown called the vote. The Board voted 5 ayes, 1 opposed. Mr. Barnette noted he voted against approving this agreement based on the fact that he was opposed to increasing the original budget for this project.

Motion to approve the agreement was approved.

Pike Heery Contract Revision

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the revision of the Pike Heery Contract for School 19. Ms. Frost seconded the motion. Mr. Gifford advised the Pike Heery contract adjustment is significantly different from the contract the Board approved earlier this evening. Thus far the District has accelerated the entire project by two years. The District has also vastly changed the number of projects, contracts, bids and most importantly, the duration of projects during the construction cycle based on lessons learned in the bidding and construction of Phases A and to a certain degree Phase B. The increase in the Pike Heery agreement is the result of those cumulative changes. Mr. Gifford advised the District has 50% or more increased the amount of time on construction, therefore the amount of personnel assigned to the job has been increased. Mr. Gifford advised the District received credit from Pike Heery for jobs that were removed (PLMA and Sunshine). The District has awarded the Hackett Middle School project with Envision providing more construction supervision and Shawn Hamlin in the Facilities Office providing more of the construction management work on the project. This last adjustment to the contract for \$296,000 reflects the change of cost in the agreements. Mr. Gifford advised this contract reflects the best assignment for the risk that the District is taking in these very complex renovation projects. Mr. Gifford advised the District will also be able to accomplish through this revision the work that is being done on the Giffen roof this summer and the work that will be done on the TOAST drainage and auditorium renovations and finishing out the work schedule through 2008. Mr. Brown called the vote. The Board voted 5 ayes and 1 opposed. Mr. Barnette noted he voted against approving this agreement based on the fact that he was opposed to increasing the original budget for this project.

Motion to approve the agreement was approved

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Voting Locations

Mr. Brown presented a listing of voting locations for the May 2006 budget vote for approval. Mr. Barnette made a motion for approval. Ms. Doeschate seconded the motion. Mr. Barnette requested that those people affected by the changes in voting locations be notified via mail, similar to last year.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve voting locations.

Resolution to Appoint Board of Registration

Mr. Brown presented the members of the Board of Registration for the May Budget Vote for approval. Mr. Barnette made a motion for approval. Ms. Jackie-Jenkins-Cox seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the resolution.

Parent Compact Policy

Mr. Brown presented the Parent Compact Policy (Title I Parental Involvement Policy #1900) for approval. Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve the policy. Ms. Jackie Jenkins-Cox seconded the motion. Mr. Brown noted the policy has been reviewed by the Policy Committee and is being presented to the Board with a recommendation for approval.

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

DISCUSSION ITEM

Swing Space

Dr. Joseph extended appreciation for the feedback and input from parents, community members and the Board Members with respect to a swing space plan for Hackett Middle School during renovation. The feedback received compelled the District to think more in depth about alternatives to what was originally put forth as a viable plan, for many good reasons. Dr. Joseph noted the presentation this evening is a re-designed swing space plan that actually has as its highlights, delaying the movement of Hackett, although the District is not delaying construction, which then allows Hackett to inhabit the Philip Schuyler swing space in total as it was originally planned.

Mr. White advised the revised timeline calls for School 16 presently at Philip Schuyler and School 18 at the old Montessori moving to their new reconstructed buildings in January 2007. At that time, Hackett Middle School would move into the Philip Schuyler swing space in total. Hackett Middle School will inhabit the Philip Schuyler swing space from January 2007 to June 2008. The renovated Hackett Middle School would open in September of 2008. Mr. White advised renovations of Hackett would start in June of 2006 with renovations to areas that will not impact instructional space.

Mr. White reviewed enrollment of middle school students for the coming year with current geographic patterns for Hackett and Philip Livingston, Myers Middle School populated by lottery, North Albany Academy will be a neighborhood school with open seats populated by lottery and Philip Livingston will remain a magnet lottery option for grade 6 students. Mr. White advised the interim plan would include a .5 mile neighborhood preference zone for Myers Middle School with sibling preference for Myers Middle School and North Albany Academy lottery. Mr. White review swing space recommendations for Hackett, Philip Livingston, Myers and North Albany for 2006-07 and 2007-2008, with Grade 6 remaining in TOAST, ASH, Giffen and Arbor Hill. The middle school configuration for 2008-09 is based on the assumption that Philip Livingston would be closed and that Hackett and Myers would become lottery options or attendance zoned. Students who live beyond .5 miles from the swing space location will be provided transportation during the transition.

Mr. White advised the District is still reviewing options for School 19 swing space. However, this plan calls for grade 6 at School 19 going to the middle schools next year.

At the conclusion of the presentation and discussion, Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to suspend the rules to bring this item forward for approval. Ms. Jackie Jenkins-Cox seconded the motion.

The Board voted 5 ayes and 1 opposed. Mr. Barnette was opposed based on the fact that the full Board was not present and that this vote was not listed on the agenda.

Motion to amend the agenda passed.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the swing space plan presented this evening. Ms. Doeschate seconded the motion. Following discussion Dr. Joseph apologized for the confusion and advised that Board approval of this plan is not necessary. The Board has previously designated Philip Schuyler as the swing space site for the facilities plan. Dr. Joseph advised the item was brought to the Board for information and discussion, not for approval. Mrs. Gaffuri withdrew her motion.

2006-2007 Budget Development

Dr. Joseph advised this is the first step in the budget development process where the District starts to lay the groundwork for the budget itself. Dr. Joseph advised last year the Board and administration spent a considerable amount of time focusing on goals and strategies and talked extensively about what the District was trying to accomplish and programs before it reached a place where there was discussion about the budget and actual dollars to support the programs. Dr. Joseph advised that process worked very well. Dr. Joseph advised in this first step in the process she would be walking through the goals and achievement objectives and what programs the District has that exist and what strategies the District will be looking forward to implementing or supporting with next year's budget.

Dr. Joseph continued with review of the goals, objectives and strategies. Dr. Joseph also spoke about initiatives that would be targeted for next year's budget discussions. Dr. Joseph noted other considerations in the budget development process such as unfunded mandates, i.e. the mandated Math Standards that requires new textbooks, professional development, program changes, etc., the elements of NCLB, Charter Schools, Uncontrollable Costs such as Health Care, Debt Service, Energy, Transportation, Tax Certioraries, Employee Retirement System/ Teachers Retirement System. Dr. Joseph advised the District would continue to work with these strategies through the budget development process.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

Policy Committee

Mrs. Gaffuri advised the Policy Committee has received the first part of the draft policy manual submitted by NYSSBA related to Board Governance, Operations and Accountability. The Policy Committee reviewed the listing of policies and identified policies that should be reviewed by administrator staff and those that should be reviewed by the Board Policy Committee members. The Policy Committee will meet again on March 6th to review required policies. Kathy Wolverton of Girvin & Ferlazzo will also participate in that review. Policies will then be brought before the Board for review with full Board approval tentatively scheduled for the April Board meeting. A timeline for completion of the total policy manual is expected to extend to June of 2007. Mrs. Gaffuri noted that as the District proceeds through this policy review, new required policies would be brought forward in a timely manner for review and approval.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Mr. Barnette advised he would like to revisit the possibility of the Board having a workshop on the lottery system so that Board Members have a better understanding of the process.

Mr. Barnette suggested the District compile information related to the percentage of student body involved in incidents that have come forward to the public. In discussion with a school administrator it was stated that only 10% of the student body had been involved in such incidents. Mr. Barnette suggested the District compile that information and bring it forward to the Board. Mr. Barnette noted that the fact is that the majority of students are not involved in these incidents.

Mr. Brown requested that the Superintendent follow up in contacting the Dr. Perkins, Chairman of Council of Urban School Districts for a presentation at a roundtable meeting.

Mr. Brown advised everyone is formally invited to the awards ceremony for the winners of the Black History Month Contest on Sunday, February 12, 2006 starting at 2 p.m. at the State Museum Auditorium. Mr. Brown advised of the 28 winners, who are being featured in the media during the month of February, eight are from the Albany Public Schools.

Mr. Brown advised he attended a meeting of the New York State Association of Small City School Districts Board and advised he would forward the minutes of that meeting to Board Members.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Barnette made a motion to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Catherine L. Cutting
Clerk of the Board