

# PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

August 2, 2005

7:00 p.m.

Albany High School

**PRESENT:** Scott Wexler (arrived at 8:00 p.m.)      Dr. Eva Joseph  
Edward Brown      Kathy Wolverton  
Susan Kushner      Terrance White  
William Barnette      Joseph Dragone  
Patricia Fahy      Robert Paquette  
Teneka Frost      Linda Jackson-Chalmers  
Barbara Gaffuri

**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.

Mr. Barnette made a motion to amend the agenda under item 6, Discussion Item, to include item ii. Naming of the Middle School. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Joseph noted that this Saturday the African American Festival would take place at the Empire State Plaza. The District will have a booth providing activities for children. Dr. Joseph advised Harcourt, the company that supports the District English Language Arts Program has donated a large number of brand new literature books for students as giveaways. The District will also have an opportunity to address the audience from the main stage at some time during the day.

The District continues preparation for the opening of schools. Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies have been scheduled for the three new schools opening in September. The North Albany Academy (former School 20), September 6 from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m.; the new middle school at Kelton Court, August 25 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.; and Montessori Magnet School, August 31 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

The District is hosting a number of opportunities for the public to view the new schools. A breakfast has been planned with realtors through the Greater Capital Region Realtors Association to provide an opportunity to tour the schools and to allow the District an opportunity to provide information about the quality of the District programs.

Dr. Joseph introduced John Cutro from the audience. Dr. Joseph noted through the efforts of Ms. Kushner, the District was able to secure a \$5,000 grant, supported in partnership with the Trinity Institution. Mr. Cutro will be providing to the District his services in youth violence intervention.

Dr. Joseph noted the SUNY Educational Alliance continues to move forward in collaboration with Dr. Kermit Hall, President of SUNY Albany. Dr. Joseph advised the group has set some goals for this collaboration and a meeting has been scheduled with the high school principal and Dr. Caballeros from the NANO Technology Program as well as representatives from the Genesis Cancer Research Center for strengthening District opportunities in terms of advanced study in cutting edge technology and sciences.

Dr. Joseph welcomed Mr. Joseph Dragone, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education to the dais, and Ms. Kathleen Wetmore in the audience, who will be appointed this evening to the position of Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs.

Mr. Barnette noted the feedback he has received relative to the public outreach and partnering in the community by the Superintendent has been outstanding. People are very appreciative of these efforts in the community.

Ms. Kushner noted the District has a very comprehensive package that is sent to students in Albany applying to colleges would be an excellent resource to be distributed to realtors. The information gives a background of the City and the various colleges Albany students have been accepted for admission.

#### **PUBLIC INFORMATION**

1. Paul Stewart addressed the Board relative to naming the middle school at Kelton Court.
2. Mary Liz Stewart addressed the Board relative to naming the middle school at Kelton Court.
3. Star Asis Ginyard, Oceana Morris, Majestic Tillman, Patrice Smith and Tyrell Hughes addressed the Board relative to student issues in the schools.
4. Mark Mishler addressed the Board relative to parent involvement in education.
5. John Cutro addressed the Board relative to working with the District to address school violence.
6. Nell Stokes-Holmes addressed the Board relative to naming the middle school at Kelton Court.
7. Gene Damm addressed the Board relative to naming the middle school at Kelton Court.
8. Leo Levy addressed the Board relative to naming the middle school at Kelton Court.
9. Nolene Smith addressed the Board relative to the students who spoke earlier and the youth task force.

#### **ROUTINE CONSENT ITEMS**

Mr. Wexler presented Routine Consent Items including Proceedings of Meetings for July 5, 2005, Resignations, Leaves of Absence, Transfers, Abolish Position, Creation of Position, Appointments (Probationary Teachers, Regular Substitutes, Miscellaneous, Itinerant Substitute Teachers, Civil Service, Tenure Appointments, Emergency Conditional Appointments), Attendance at Conferences, Treasurer's Report, Central Treasurer's Report for Extra Classroom Activity Fund, Bid Awards, 2004 Budget Transfers under \$10,000, 2004 Budget Transfers over \$10,000, 2005 Budget Transfers under \$10,000, 2005 Budget Transfers over \$10,000, Budget Status Report, Real Property Tax Adjustments and Contracts for Grants and Special Projects (Harbridge Consulting Group).

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve routine consent items. Mr. Barnette seconded the motion. Mr. Barnette requested that Tenure Appointments and Emergency Conditional Appointments be set aside. Ms. Fahy requested that proceeding of July 5, 2005 and 2004-05 Budget Transfers over \$10,000 be set aside.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion absent the items to be set aside.

Ms. Fahy made a motion to approve proceedings from July 5, 2005. Ms. Frost seconded the motion. Ms. Fahy advised page 5 indicates the vote of Phases E & F indicates 6 ayes, 1 opposed and 1 abstention. The vote should be 5 ayes, 1 opposed and 1 abstention.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve Tenure Appointments. Ms. Frost seconded the motion. Mr. Barnette asked when the annual the annual reception for newly tenured teachers would be scheduled. Ms. Jackson-Chalmers noted the reception would be scheduled for the September 15, meeting.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve Emergency Conditional Appointments. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion. Mr. Barnette thanked the cabinet for separating the certified and uncertified Itinerant Substitute Teachers.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Ms. Fahy made a motion to approve 2004-05 Budget Transfer over \$10,000. Ms. Frost seconded the motion. Ms. Fahy asked for an explanation of a \$32,000 transfer for after-school programs. Mr. Paquette noted the figure represents the amount incurred from September to December of 2004. Funding from January to June was covered by the extended after school grant. Mr. Paquette noted the entire program is included in a grant for this year. Dr. Joseph noted this grant is part of the extended school day school violence program, which funds a large portion of the extended day program at Abrookin, the after school high school program.

Mr. Frost requested clarification of the wording "apparently due to" in the explanation of a budget transfer for CDTA. Mr. Paquette advised he, along with Mr. Verrigni, Transportation Director, would be meeting with CDTA to discuss billing.

Mrs. Gaffuri requested information relative to Teacher Reimbursement. Ms. Jackson-Chalmers noted more teaching assistants are taking advantage of the tuition reimbursement benefits of the District. Reimbursement is based on enrollment of at least two courses per semester. The SUNY rate of reimbursement is utilized and participants are required to achieve at least a B average.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

### **FACILITIES PROJECT REPORT**

#### **Information Item Related to the Facilities Project**

##### **High School Restructuring Plan**

Mr. Gifford, along with the members of the Facilities Project Team and architectural consultants presented a very comprehensive review of a visual architectural scheme of the proposed high school that matches the educational plan with the architectural design. Mr. Gifford advised the District has spent a great deal of time over the past year addressing the problems and educational issues to arrive at a program. The presentation this evening is a demonstration of how that

program works in terms of the referendum questions, i.e. a facility that supports the has to support that educational spec.

Mr. Gifford advised this referendum would be much different than the last referendum. The district is focused on one facility that will take a number of years to complete, but does not have the number of components involved in the previous referendum. Mr. Gifford advised the need to be accurate in terms of cost estimates, budgeting, scheduling, phasing, operations during the construction is critical to the success of this referendum and the plan. Mr. Gifford advised it is absolutely necessary for this educational vision to be captured in greater detail in terms of functional characteristics and design characteristics and how the building reworks. Mr. Gifford advised the presentation this evening focuses on the present building and why it doesn't work, why the project needs to be done and the program and plan of action to address that. Mr. Gifford advised it is not about architecture. It is about the education. Mr. Gifford the team would be looking for guidance to go forward in pricing the project. Mr. Hamlin and Sandra Bapte of Envision Architects presented a model and photos of the proposed facility for review. Mr. Wexler advised there would be more conversations about the plan in upcoming meetings.

### **Discussion Items Related to the Facilities Project**

#### **Collins & Scoville Planning Proposal**

Mr. Wexler presented a proposal from Collins & Scoville for planning services to evaluate options for reconfiguration of Philip Schuyler Elementary School and Philip Livingston Magnet Academy. Mr. Gifford advised the comprehensiveness of the existing facility plan the district as become acutely aware of the importance of adequate surge space in supporting programs for students who are displaced during construction. Mr. Gifford advised he has asked Collins & Scoville and Sue Robertson, the educational planner to prepare the proposal presented this evening to evaluate two buildings that have been planning stages for surge space. The study will focus on the suitability of each structure for alternative occupancy and will develop concept cost estimates relating to the options. Mr. Wexler made a motion to dispense the rules to allow the board to go to an action item on this. Mr. Barnette seconded the motion.

The Board voted 6 ayes and 1 nay to suspend the rules.

Ms. Fahy was opposed. Motion passed.

Mr. Wexler made a motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Barnette seconded the motion. Following discussion, Mr. Wexler noted he made a motion to suspend the rules based on the fact that there were no questions raised when he presented a motion to suspend the rules to act on this item. Based on the need for additional information, Mr. Wexler rescinded the motion. This item will be presented for approval at the next meeting. Mr. Barnette noted he would not be present at the next meeting and that he is supportive of approving the contract.

#### **Resolution to Approve SEORA**

Mr. Gifford advised this is a general resolution that will be on the next regular meeting agenda for action. Mr. Gifford noted the project description has not yet been completed pending discussions this evening. The resolution has been drafted by Girvin & Ferlazzo and in recognition of the process that the district will begin this fall. Mr. Gifford advised he would be presenting revised timelines at the next meeting as well.

**Action Item Related to the Facilities Project**

**Approval of Change Orders**

Mr. Gifford advised included in these change orders is a change order in the amount of approximately \$95,000 for the Hackett roof. Mr. Gifford advised in the process of going forward with the roof at Hackett Middle School there were pieces of masonry restoration that are necessary that the facilities team could not have cost estimated in the bidding process. Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve change orders as presented. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. Following discussion, the Mr. Wexler called for a vote.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Appointment of Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education**

Mr. Wexler presented a resolution as follows:

**APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR BUSINESS AFFAIRS**

**IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that Kathleen Wetmore is appointed to the position of Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs for a term of three (3) years from September 1, 2005 until June 30, 2008.

An employment agreement setting forth Ms. Wetmore's terms and conditions of employment is also approved and the President of the Board of Education is authorized to execute said agreement on behalf of the District. Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the resolution. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**Approval of 2005-2006 Tax Warrant**

Mr. Wexler advised this item is off the agenda this evening. Dr. Joseph noted this is replaced with a request to have a Board meeting scheduled for August 18, 2005 for purposes of approving the tax warrant. A quorum for that meeting will be confirmed.

**DISCUSSION**

**Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Dr. Joseph advised the changes in this policy reflect discussions by the Board earlier this year relative to notifying parents of their rights in terms of student information that can be released by the District. Ms. Wolverton of Girvin & Ferlazzo advised the policy presented this evening reflect minor language changes relative to directory information (name, address and telephone number) of students that the District can release without prior approval of a parent or a student 28 years of age or older. Ms. Wolverton noted the changes focus on the forms at the end of the policy. Following discussion, Ms. Wolverton reviewed the changes identified by Board Members which include the return of the forms to the building principals and further clarification advising parents and/or students 18 years of age and older that if the form is not signed and returned, directory information will be released to the stated entities. The Board also agreed to have a separate form for each child. Mr. Barnette made a motion to suspend the rules to present this item for action this evening. Ms. Fahy seconded the motion. Mr. Wexler advised seeing no objection, the item is moved to an action item. Mr. Barnette made a motion to approve the policy as amended. Ms. Fahy seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**Naming of the Middle School**

Mr. Wexler noted the amendment to the agenda states the item as a discussion item. Mr. Wexler proposed 15 minutes for the discussion. Dr. Joseph noted the committee appreciates all the suggestions that have been made to date. Dr. Joseph noted there have been additional suggestions this evening and noted there are other schools that will be renamed as the facilities project moves forward. Dr. Joseph noted at this point in time the District has not considered the name of a person for schools, primarily focusing on area. However, in naming the middle school at Kelton Court there might be consideration for changing what had become practice in terms of naming new schools. Dr. Joseph also noted that the district does not have a school named after an African American male. Dr. Joseph advised in conjunction with the presentation made by Mr. Stewart during the public comment portion of the meeting, she is bringing forward for consideration by the Board this evening, the name of Stephen Myers Middle School for the middle school at the Kelton Court site. Following discussion a recommendation was made to include the name of Harriet Myers in the name (Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School), discussion also included educating the community about the significance of the name.

Following a lengthy discussion, Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to name the middle school Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. Mr. Wexler noted the Board would need to act on approval to suspend the rules in order to vote on this motion.

Ms. Kushner made a motion to suspend the rules to move this item for action. Mr. Barnette seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Wexler referred to the main motion to name the middle school at Kelton Court the Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School. Mrs. Gaffuri noted the public should be educated relative to the significance of the name, prior to the ribbon cutting ceremony on August 25<sup>th</sup>. Discussion was delayed so that information relative to Harriet Myers could be verified.

Mr. Brown made a motion to amend the main motion. Mr. Brown offered a friendly amendment to change the name to the Stephen and Harriet Myers Academy. Mrs. Gaffuri did not accept the amendment to the motion. Mr. Brown offered an unfriendly amendment. There was no second to the motion. Mr. Brown then offered a friendly amendment to include the educational component to the motion as follows. The Board of Education looks forward to working with the District in the implementation of an ongoing education/information campaign to ensure that the student body and community has a full understanding of the significance of this name. Mrs. Gaffuri accepted the friendly amendment. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion. Mr. Barnette then made a motion to include all schools in the educational component. Following discussion, Mr. Wexler suggested the Board approve the motion to name the middle school the Stephen and Harriet Myers Middle School with the educational component as it relates to this school included in the motion and then immediately entertain a motion to extend the educational component to the other schools in the District. Mr. Wexler then called the question.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Barnette made a motion that the Board of Education works with the administration in the implementation of an ongoing education/information campaign to ensure that the student body and community has a full understanding of the significance of the names of each of the District schools. Ms. Kushner seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

**BOARD MEMBER ITEMS**

Mr. Brown advised Karen Brown of Big Brother Big Sisters will be meeting with the Superintendent relative to monies the organization is donating to the District for the middle schools over the next two school years. Mr. Brown advised a more detailed report would be presented to the Board at a future date.

Mr. Barnette advised he had an opportunity to access almost new supplies for the District that totaled approximately several thousand dollars. More importantly, staff commented to Mr. Barnette how cooperative Mr. Paquette was in obtaining these supplies. Mr. Barnette advised he was told that Mr. Paquette was a pleasure to deal with.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Ms. Frost made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned at 11:35 p.m.

Catherine L. Cutting  
Clerk of the Board