

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

August 19, 2010

7:00 p.m.

Pine Hills Elementary School

PRESENT: Dan Egan, President
Rose Brandon, Secretary
Barbara Gaffuri
Edith Leet
Melissa Mackey
Dr. Raymond Colucciello
Bill Hogan
Dr. Tresa Diggs
Linda Jackson-Chalmers
Linda Rudnick

ABSENT: Wayne Morris

Call to Order:

- Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Members of the audience were welcomed and thanked for taking the time to attend the meeting.
- The Mission Statement was read.

Mr. Egan noted there is an addendum to the agenda under Routine Consent to include Authorization to Enter into Contracts and a Resolution to Approve a Public Hearing for the Mosaic Stone Charter School application. In addition, the Shared Decision Making Plan discussion has been removed from the agenda.

Ms. Mackey made a motion to approve the changes. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.
The Board voted 5-0 to approve the motion.
Motion passed.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Colucciello introduced Mr. John Harris, representing the New York State Fatherhood Initiative. Mr. Harris advised the Black Star Project in collaboration with State and National sponsors has initiated the "Dads Take Your Child to School" project to increase the presence of fathers and male role models in the lives of student education. Participation is encouraged to improve fatherhood/male image in education; increase fatherhood/male involvement in schools; encourage active participation of males in children's education, encourage father-friendly environments in educational institutions, and the create an active presence of males in school year-round. Fathers and males are encouraged to sign a pledge that they will participate in their child's education. This program has been successfully piloted at Arbor Hill Elementary School and Sheridan Preparatory Academy. This year, this project will involve all the elementary schools in collaboration with NYS Family & Child Services. This program is being presented all over New York State. September 21, 2010, is the date that these activities are planned in all the elementary schools. For students who do not have participating fathers, the brothers, uncles, and other male figures in the student's life will be invited to participate.

Ms. Roz Gaines-Harrell presented an overview of last-minute items that need to be completed prior to the opening of the newly renovated Arbor Hill Elementary School. A community event is planned for Saturday, August 19, 2010, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. to give parents and students the opportunity to register students and sign up for health insurance. There will be entertainment and refreshments available for everyone.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Robert Malerba addressed the Board regarding performance assessments and the importance of increasing assessments in order to identify students' needs as quickly as possible so that these students receive the help they need to improve achievement.

ROUTINE CONSENT

Mr. Egan presented the following Routine Consent items for approval: Appointments (Probationary, Reappointment, Summer School); Transfers; Retirements/Resignations/Termination; Budget Transfers under \$10,000, 2009-2010; Budget Transfers over \$10,000, 2009-2010; Authorization to Enter Into Contracts; and Resolution to Approve Public Hearing for the Mosaic Stone Charter School.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve Routine Consent items. Ms. Mackey seconded the motion. Mrs. Leet asked that the Resolution to Approve a Public Hearing for the Mosaic Stone Charter School be set aside. The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the Routine Consent items, absent the item set aside.

Motion passed.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the Resolution to Approve a Public Hearing for the Mosaic Stone Charter School. Mrs. Mackey seconded the motion. Mrs. Leet asked for clarification of the wording on the resolution. Suggested changes will be reflected in the resolution.

The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the resolution.

Motion passed.

INFORMATION

High School Curriculum Alignment

Dr. Diggs, along with Doreen Mitchell, Instructional Supervisor for Math, and Brian Cartwright, Instructional Supervisor for Social Studies gave a presentation on the development of curriculum pacing maps for the 2010-11 school year. Following the presentation, Board members asked for information to be presented in writing with the focus on the findings of the JIT report.

Dr. Diggs advised the Instructional Supervisors have met with consultants from CASDA to discuss services needed in the areas of curriculum alignment for ELA and Math. The District will be partnering with CASDA to provide professional development and instructional delivery services.

- The variation in weight of items that make up the final grade is of concern. This should be addressed across the board.
- There is also concern about variances in the pacing maps through the different subject areas.

- Are the departmental and grade-level meetings to discuss this information mandatory? Teachers are strongly encouraged to attend. Teachers are eager to assist students.
- Formalized auditing of curriculum. Can this be done with other districts? Accountability of teachers is a concern.
- The recommendation from JIT suggested accountability of teachers and mentioned walk-throughs. What is your plan to handle that?
Observations are scheduled during the year. The recommendation from the JIT report is unannounced walk-throughs in the classrooms.

The Board of Education will be provided additional information as requested, along with reports in English and Science. Funding will be provided by the School Improvement Grant.

Data System for Collection of Student Information

Mr. Cioffi provided Board members with a very comprehensive presentation on Data Collection, Storage, and Use in the District. The presentation included how the District is currently monitoring students; programs that are in place for student monitoring, student tracking systems; and considerations and concerns. Mr. Cioffi noted the District has a number of systems in place at this time. However, there is much to be done. Mr. Cioffi advised the District needs to build a system to meet the specific needs. Staff training will also be an important piece of this project. The District needs to identify a system that will provide one point of access. The system needs to be seamless, user friendly, parent friendly, and easy to manage. The District wants to be able to take the information from this system that can be shared with parents in discussing the needs of their student.

- Will the District receive data from Charter School students returning to the District?
The District has already received that information.
- Is there some way the District could partner with other institutions in the area to seek volunteers for this project? Teacher involvement is a very important piece. Reaching out to those institutions in the area is a good idea. The District will reach out to the Regional Information Centers downstate, to see how they are able to use data, etc. Power School will become increasingly more important with new teacher and principal evaluations, coming up next September. Parent portals will be available to all parents at that time.
- Is there a possibility to use this project that students could work on this project?
That is a possibility that will be considered.
 - Are we at the full functionality of Power School?
No, mainly because the District has other programs that work more efficiently.
 - Is it worth maintaining Power School?
Yes, the District needs to have a student management system. Any other system will be very expensive to change over to at this time. The District is doing more and more things with Power School. The State will be increasing data points that Power School will allow the District to provide.
 - Can one program or system do it all?
No. However, the main goal is to bring the other systems into Power School, i.e. Free & Reduced Lunch Program, Library.
 - What indication do we have that teachers are using the systems?
Primarily from the principals and the data team that works with grade level teachers. Principals are getting used to using the data. Teachers need to be brought in. The District has to start encouraging and training teachers and principals to use the data.

- Will all the Alternative Education Programs have access to the program?
All those students will be in the system. The system has been developed to keep the Alt Ed students in the system under Albany High School. They will remain in the system.
- When will the District have a comprehensive system in place?
Mr. Cioffi noted that the District needs to do due diligence to insure that the proper program is in place to provide the information that the District will need in the future. This could take a considerable amount of time.
- Can the Board get a report of the percentage of teachers using Power School by school and subject area – using the 2009-10 school year? Is Power School a popular system?
Yes, Power School is one of the bigger student management systems. We are in the mainstream supported by BOCES and RIC. Power School is also SIF Certified.
- Is there a system available that meets the needs of the District?
Every software vendor has stated that they can and will work with Power School for integration. Power School does not do integration.
- Would it make sense for the District to contract out this project?
That possibility is currently being investigated. Assistant Superintendents, Supervisors, and Principals have been part of these initial discussions. A planning team will be established as this project goes forward.

Dr. Colucciello cautioned that the District needs to move cautiously, keeping in mind the requirements that the State management systems may present additional needs. Dr. Malerba noted the data system should include behavioral issues related to individual students.

ACTION

2010-2011 Tax Warrant

Mr. Hogan advised there are a number of unknowns related to the State budget: how much State Aid the District will receive; whether the charter school tuition rate will be frozen; whether the District will receive funds through the Federal jobs bill; and whether or not the District will receive funds from the School Improvement Grant for the high school restructuring. The District is anticipating a surplus in the 2009 budget, which could total \$8 million. Mr. Hogan noted the recommendation is to preserve the surplus funds to cope with the variables this year and prepare for the large funding deficits in upcoming budget cycles.

The District is recommending a School Tax levy of 3.87%. Mr. Hogan noted that changes in assessments and STAR Aid impact the overall increase in the school tax bill. The estimated tax bill for a property assessed at \$100,000 without STAR is \$1,923, an increase of \$163.84; with Basic STAR is \$1,339, an increase of \$145.93; and with Enhanced STAR is \$753.00, an increase of \$66.17.

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve the recommended School Tax Levy of 3.87%. Ms. Mackey seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

Employee Handbook

Mr. Egan presented the Employee Handbook for approval. Mrs. Leet commented that it is her hope that the District would be revitalizing shared decision making, and in the future there would be reference to shared decision making and the role of employees in serving on shared decision making committees.

Mrs. Leet made a motion to approve the Employee Handbook. Ms. Mackey seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.
Motion passed.

Career and Technical Educational Programs (CTE)

Ms. Lorraine Clark, a faculty member at Abrookin Vo-Tech, presented information to the Board of Education relative to programs offered at Abrookin and the need to obtain Board approval and subsequent SED approval. SED requires that a minimum of three career and technical education programs be approved by New York State in order to put a technical endorsement on high school diplomas. Also, Perkins Grant Funding is based on program approval.

Three programs are up for approval: Culinary, Cosmetology I & II, and Electrical Technologies I & II. In addition, Abrookin offers Construction I & II, Carpentry I & II, and the CAN program. The Early Childhood Program will be complete in the fall. Ms. Clark reviewed the approval process, indicating the stakeholders in the process.

Ms. Mackey made a motion to approve the programs. Mrs. Gaffuri seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.
Motion passed.

Policies

The following policies were presented for approval.

- 2310 Regular Meetings
- 2320 Special Meetings
- 2330 Executive Session
- 2340 Notice of Meetings
- 2342 Agenda Preparation and Dissemination
- 2350 Meeting Procedures
- 2351 Quorum
- 2352 Rules of Order
- 2360 Minutes
- 2382 Broadcasting and Taping of Meetings

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to approve policies as presented. Ms. Mackey seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the motion.
Motion passed.

Board Committee Reports

Mr. Egan noted the Charter School Committee met several times this month. Mr. Egan asked that this issue be presented on a future agenda for discussion in consideration of recent activities.

Board Member Items

Mr. Egan noted the Board is operating with two officers for the remainder of the year. Mr. Egan invited other Board members to participate in the agenda-setting meetings so that there are three members participating in the development of the agendas.

Mrs. Leet asked if there were comments from staff relative to the proposal for Operation Graduation at all grade levels. Following discussion, Ms. Mackey clarified that the process is that when a Board member item is introduced at a Board meeting, it goes on as an agenda item for information, discussion, and action. In looking at the proposal, trying to find the definitive, actionable items that can be put into place, that might be what you are looking for. How might the District implement the steps? The next step would be where it would be placed as an agenda item and more specificity about what the Board would be looking for elementary and secondary staff to do around increasing graduation from K-12. Additionally, when items are presented, if there are four Board members who are interested in pursuing this item, it goes on a Board Member Item list that is reviewed for priorities. A suggestion was made to combine this question with the agenda-setting meeting to place this on an agenda.

Mrs. Leet noted there was confusion related to Nominating Petitions for Board candidates running in the General Election. Mrs. Leet requested that counsel investigate this issue so that clarified information is available to candidates in the future. Dr. Colucciello noted this issue will be addressed with those responsible.

Mrs. Brandon noted she received a suggestion that a middle school in Middletown, New York, was in a situation similar to what the District is going through at Albany High School. Mrs. Brandon asked that the District consider a site visit to this school to discuss their success in facing a similar situation. The District will take this into consideration.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Mackey seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Cutting