



## CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY

October 20, 2011

7:00 p.m.

Eagle Point Elementary School

**PRESENT:** Dan Egan, President  
Rose Brandon, vice President  
Felicia Green  
Edith Leet  
Melissa Mackey  
Alexandra Streznewski  
Dr. Raymond Colucciello  
Bill Hogan  
Ken Cioffi  
Linda Jackson-Chalmers  
Linda Rudnick

**ABSENT:** Dr. Tresa Diggs

### **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 made a motion to amend the agenda to include three resolutions under Routine Consent Items as follows:

### **Approval of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the City School District of Albany and the Albany Public School United Employees (APSUE)**

The Board of Education will act on a resolution to approve the MOA dated October 4, 2011

### **Approval of the Management Confidential Employee Contracts**

The Board of Education will act on a resolution to approve Management Confidential Employee Contracts, extending the terms through June 30, 2014, with a 2.95% increase per year.

### **Approval of the Cabinet Member Contracts**

The Board of Education will act on a resolution to approve Cabinet Member Contracts.

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

Motion passed.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Lesko introduced Jaquan Williams and Wesley Pluviose-Philip, along with Leslie Hatfield of Albany High School, the International Baccalaureate Program, and the Leadership Academy, inviting those present to participate in a program called "Who Gives a Sheet?" The group is taking collections of bed sheets, "bed in a bag", comforters, and money donations for neighboring communities that have suffered tremendous losses in the wake of Tropical Storm Irene. The first 100 donors will receive a free t-shirt designed by one of the students. Ms. Hatfield noted that students in the four academies are required to earn a service credit through program such as this. Dr. Colucciello noted a number of teacher volunteered to assist in installing insulation in homes in these devastated communities. Mr. Lesko added there are a number of efforts throughout the District supporting this community.

Mr. Lesko introduced Beverly Ivey, Assistant Principal at the Albany School of Humanities, noted that Faizon Rice, a student at the school appeared in distress when he had food caught in his throat. The custodian, Fernando Tobar recognized that Faizon was experiencing difficulties and went to his rescue, performing the Heimlich maneuver. Faizon's mother expressed her gratitude to Mr. Tobar for his quick response that eluded what could have been a very serious outcome. Mrs. Rice noted that along with teachers there is an entire community looking out for the children in Albany. Faizon personally thanked Mr. Tobar. Mr. Tobar noted he was in the right place and the right time.

Mr. Lesko noted that Elaine Houston of Channel 13 News is doing a piece on the Freedom Riders that will air next week. The student will be making a presentation at the Unitarian Church on November 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Marlon Anderson addressed the Board regarding the possibility of a new high school at the Harriman Campus. Students should not have to travel in excess of 6 miles to attend high school.
2. Loretta Ackerman addressed the Board regarding the possibility of a new high school at the Harriman Campus. Ms. Ackerman is against this idea, based on the impact of bonding to pay for this project. The dynamics of the neighborhood will be negatively impacted. Tax paying homeowners will be leaving the City.
3. Vincent Rigosu addressed the Board regarding the possibility of a new high school at the Harriman Campus. Mr. Rigosu thanked the Board for holding school taxes. A new school will not improve student achievement. Parent involvement is what is necessary for improve student achievement, not new buildings. City employees don't even live in the City because of the schools and taxes.
4. Dr. Malerba addressed the Board regarding the Board Goals. Dr. Malerba advised that collaborative planning is in everyone's interest. Dr. Malerba suggested the development of a top-notch literacy training program for volunteers.
5. Fran Peters addressed the Board regarding the possibility of a new high school at the Harriman Campus. Ms. Peters advised she is opposed to the negative effect a high school in this neighborhood would present.
6. Marie Coluccio advised she is opposed to the relocation of a high school in Albany. This would have a negative impact on the neighborhood.
7. Frank Commiso, Jr., Common Council Member from the 15<sup>th</sup> Ward addressed the Board regarding a concern about the affordability of such a project in terms of debt service. The public should be told about the impact on taxes of this project.

### **FACILITIES PROJECT**

#### **Change Orders**

Mr. Egan made a motion to approve the change orders for Albany High School. Ms. Streznewski seconded the motion. Mr. Hogan presented change orders related to the renovations at the high school. The Facilities Committee has reviewed the change orders.

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

Motion passed.

### **ROUTINE CONSENT**

Mr. Egan presented the following routine consent items for approval, noting there were three additional resolution added to this item at the beginning of the meeting. Approval of an MOA between the City School District of Albany and the Albany Public School United Employees; Approval of the Management Confidential Employee Contracts and Approve of the Cabinet Contracts; Appointments (Miscellaneous, Summer School 2011, 2011-2012); Transfers; Leaves of Absence; Corrections; Resolution to Approve Donation; Bid Award (Main Care); Authorization to Enter into Contracts; and, Resolution to Approve Charter School Public Hearing. Ms. Streznewski made a motion for approval. Ms. Green seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Motion passed.

### **INFORMATION**

#### **High School Redesign**

Dr. McCalla, Principal of Albany High School gave a presentation on the status of the high school redesign including the Building Leadership Structure, School Governance, Instructional Strategies, Instructional Monitoring Strategies, AVID, Master Schedule Update, School Climate, School Climate & Structure – 3 year VADIR Incident Comparison and the Magnet Grant 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Initiatives-Summer Themed Camps 2011.

- What is reportable related to VADIR incidents?

There are 20 categories for VADIR that the District is required to report to the State Education Department. Those incidents range from homicide to weapons possession, burglary, fighting, etc. If these incidents result in a suspension of more than one day, they become reportable. The District maintains reportable and non-reportable incidents in the VADIR modular itself.

- What is a school court case?

The more violent incidents become school court cases.

- The course book is about to go to the printer. Has the District given any thought to redesigning the course book now that there are four academies?

The course book has been redesigned to outline the courses in each academy. Electives will be listed by academy.

- A suggestion was made for the students at Abrookin to interact with students in the lower grades so they begin to understand the offerings at Abrookin, i.e. woodworking, food services. This would link Abrookin closer to the high school.
- An expression of gratitude was extended to the District for their contribution to the Baby Institute to house the program and to have Abrookin students provide lunch for the parents of the babies in this program.
- Are teachers enforcing the Code of Conduct when it comes to the dress code?

Staff is reacting to students who are not following the dress code. Students can change their look at different times through the course of the day. The majority of students are in compliance with the dress code. Students that are non-compliant are receiving notice.

### **Alternative Education Think Tank**

Mr. Egan introduced Dr. Laura Hopson, Assistant Professor at UAlbany School of Social Welfare. Dr. Hopson will be serving as the facilitator for the Alternative Education Think Tank. Dr. Hopson advised the three subcommittees of the Think Tank will be presenting an update to the Board this evening. Mr. Cioffi reported on the Data Collection and Analysis Subcommittee. Mr. Cioffi reviewed the process, findings, referrals, data overview and recommendations. Recommendations include consistent criteria for referrals in all middle schools, more comprehensive referral information, a check list accompanying the referral information listing the interventions and the results of each intervention. The group discussed the possibility of returning students from alternative education to regular classes in a shorter amount of time, if they are ready to move one. The subcommittee will now move into the TOPS program as part of the data analysis.

Ms. Jackson-Chalmers reported on the Code of Conduct subcommittee. Revision to the Code of Conduct has been conducted by a committee in the District each year in the past. The review of the Code of Conduct will take place through the course of this year, focusing on the listing of range of consequences in the policy.

Ms. Noelene Smith reported on the Personal Education Plan (PEP) Subcommittee. The subcommittee is working diligently to develop a strategy that promotes a roadmap for success for all students in the District. The group has been looking at research to determine best practices. The subcommittee will develop a timeline for implementation, pilot materials, training, IT and information tracking. The ALC program will serve as the incubator of pilot materials and implementation strategies. By January 2012, the PEP will be piloted at the ALC.

- What might the PEP look like?

The plan would include the grade the child is in and the reading level of the student. As needed, a set of interventions would be defined in the plan, stating what is expected from the teachers in assisting these students in moving forward. The group is looking at various plans to determine what works best for the District.

- The IEP is a corrective plan. The PEP determines where the student is and where they are expected to go. The PEP is a way to determine whether or not the student is on track.
- The PEP will be used for all students. When the students move from the norm, the PEP will indicate those interventions that will be used to get the student back on track. Research indicates that an inclusive model is more effective.
- Will the PEP be automated?

Yes.

A suggestion was made to include some indication of the student's individual learning style in the plan. There was also a suggestion that "Albany's Promise" be considered in developing the plan. Ms. Smith noted the Albany Promise is a much broader program. The PEP will be an internal document that is more specific to the student.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **District Goals**

Mr. Egan presented the working draft on District goals. Mr. Egan suggested an additional column indicating the responsible manager for each of the strategies. Ms. Green expressed concern that the goal as written is very broad. It does not specifically target the issue of students who undereducated in the District. Dr. Colucciello noted the goal is developed based on the Albany Public Schools being removed from the State Education Department lists. In order to accomplish this, these subgroups need to be addressed. Following additional discussion, it was agreed that the goal should remain as written. Improved instruction will benefit all students. However, the District should not become complacent when students are struggling.

Ms. Streznewski questioned the measurement under, Raise achievement level 25% for all subgroups, defined in the goal. What is the measurement? The clarification is if there are 100 students in the group scoring Level 1 this year at school X, next year that number would be 75 students at Level 1. Additionally, the statement of balancing schools racial/social/economics appears contradicts the neighborhood schools? Because of the neighborhood school concept the schools are not balanced. Following discussion, the Board agreed that this should be eliminated from this document. Mr. Egan also suggested that the development of a full day summer school program should also be removed from the document for future discussion.

Mr. Egan noted that the final document will be turned over to the staff, keeping in mind that in order to accomplish this goal, the Board needs to commit to two things. One, the Board needs to refrain from adding on additional missions and two that the Board follows up to hold the District accountable for that goal. Mr. Egan made a suggestion to have the staff make the changes as suggested, send the revised document to the Board, comments can be forwarded to the Superintendent's office, and the document will be placed on the next agenda for approval.

### **Policies**

Mr. Egan presented the following policies for review:

- 5405 Wellness
- 5420 Student Health Services
- 5240R Student Health Services Regulations
- 5440 Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Substance Use/Abuse
- 5460 Child Abuse in a Domestic Setting
- 5460R Child Abuse in a Domestic Setting Regulations
- 5500 Student Records (FERPA)

Mrs. Jackson-Chalmers the Policy Committee reviewed ten policies. The Field Trip Policy, Notification of Sex Offenders Policy, and Student Privacy Policy were held pending further discussion. Mrs. Jackson-Chalmers noted these seven policies have been duly reviewed by the appropriate administrative staff. With no additional discussion, the policies will be placed on the next agenda for approval.

### **Budget Development Calendar**

Mr. Hogan presented the Budget Development Calendar for the 2012-2013 school budget. There are nine opportunities for input by the Board and the public. In addition there will be budget hearing and various other notifications, i.e. newsletter, notices, etc. There are two additional meetings on this schedule, March 29, 2012 and April 17, 2012. Mr. Egan suggested adding the Citizen's Budget Committee to this calendar. These will be added to this listing. Mrs. Leet suggested a small group approach as suggested by NYSSBA, with a discussion in early March, with facilitators, to garner public input. Mr. Hogan noted perhaps the format of the meeting with the Citizen Advisory Committee, including the discussion piece could accommodate this suggestion. The revised calendar will be presented at the next meeting for approval. Ms. Green requested budget to actual figure for the prior two years be distributed to the Board prior to the end of the year. Mr. Hogan will forward this information. Ms. Streznewski expressed concerns related to the timing of the first draft of the budget and the level of detail included in that document, requesting line item detail. Ms. Mackey requested information on mandated programs. These requests will also be considered.

Following additional discussion relative to school based budgets and timing of public input, a suggestion was made for Board members to submit questions and comments to the Audit Committee for their consideration. There was also a request for posting public documents on line, using the public library as a source for those who do not have a home computer.

### **ACTION**

#### **Approval of New Course Offerings 2012-2013 at Albany High School**

The following course offerings for the 2012-2013 school year at Albany High School were presented for approval.

The Fashion Industry	Global and Gourmet Foods
AP Language and Composition	Forensic Science
Public Speaking 1: Speech	Public Speaking 2: Debate
Contemporary Voices	Ethnicity and Identity
Introduction Business Management	International Business Management

Mr. Streznewski made a motion for approval. Dr. Brandon seconded the motion.

- Is the District in the process of adding courses around the academies? Has the District institutionalized the process to accommodate the master schedule for next year?

The District is currently in the process of completing the current schedule, at which time the focus will move to next year's schedule.

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

Motion passed.

#### **Approval of Policies**

Mr. Egan presented the following policies for approval.

6000 Fiscal Management Goals	6680 Internal Audit Function
6030 Performance Bonds	6700 Purchasing
6240 Investments	6700R Purchasing Regulations
6240R Investment Regulations	6410 Authorized Signatures
6670 Petty Cash/Petty Cash Accounts	6800 Payroll Procedures
6900 Disposal of District Property	

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

Motion passed.

### **BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Hogan advised the Facilities Committee met with representatives from TOAST regarding a pavilion to be constructed at the school. This item will be brought before the in January to accept a donation for this project. CSR has volunteered their time on this project for architectural and engineering services. The Committee also discussed the project underway at the high school and new projects that will be starting in the near future, which is part of the \$11.4 million projects at Giffen and Abrookin. The high school renovations will be held pending additional discussion of the high school. There is also an RFP out for a construction manager.

The Curriculum Committee met earlier this week. A representative of BOCES provided an overview of the MAP standards. The next meeting will be scheduled in November.

### **BOARD MEMBER ITEMS**

Ms. Streznewski requested an overview of the Music Program throughout the District, what time of day is it offered, how long a period of time and whether or not students are taken out of classes for music. This will be place on a future agenda.

Ms. Streznewski suggested the District start to reach the community relative to the possibility of a new high school at the Harriman Campus. This will be placed on a future agenda.

Ms. Green asked for a Board discussion regarding how the minority parents can be engaged in the District. This will be placed on a future agenda. Dr. Brandon suggested a Board Community Relations Committee. Mrs. Leet noted as part of the District's Shared Decision Plan a

### **Adjournment**

Ms. Streznewski made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Green seconded the motion. The Board adjourned at 10:35p.m.