



PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION
May 15, 2008
7:00 p.m.

Pine Hills Elementary School

PRESENT: William Barnette, President
Barbara Gaffuri, Secretary
Dr. Mark Barth
Judy Doesschate
Melissa Mackey
Wayne Morris
Dr. Eva Joseph
Joseph Dragone
Linda Jackson-Chalmers
James Matthews

ABSENT: None

Call to Order:

Mr. Barnette called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Barnette welcomed the members of the audience and thanked them for taking the time to attend the meeting. Mr. Barnette read the Mission Statement.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Welcome Mr. Brian Spicer, who is scheduled to be appointed to the position of head coach this evening.
- Three scholar athletes from Albany High School have been acknowledged in the Times Union on May 8th Rachel Gorman, Anita McGill and Desha Smith, nominated by their teachers who also received recognition, Mr. Ralph (Bud) Pape, Mr. Greg Baker and Ms. Wan Chen.
- The State Education Department today released its list of high performing, gap closing schools. There were eight Albany schools on the list. Rapidly improving schools are those that have not yet met the state standard, but for three successive years had made significant gain in a very rapid way, making their AYP for three years in a row. The schools are:

Montessori Magnet School	Albany School of Humanities
Pine Hills Elementary School	Giffen Elementary School
Delaware Community School	Arbor Hill Elementary School
North Albany Academy	Sheridan Preparatory Academy
- There is great appreciation to all involved in this endeavor.
- The SURR Report was released by the State Education Department for Philip Livingston Magnet Academy. The district is moving forward in a very deliberate way with the review process. The next steps are that the Comprehensive Education Plan is being reviewed by the school team and will be presented to the board for endorsement. The Comprehensive Education Plan and the Corrective Action Plan is to be submitted to the State Education Department by the end of July. The district will be taking into consideration the recommendations from the objective SURR Review Team in the corrective action plan that will be submitted to SED.

- The budget vote is next Tuesday. Budget presentations are currently taking place in the schools and the community led by cabinet members and the superintendent. A total of 32 presentations have taken place to date. Feedback has been positive. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Canvass of vote will take place at Albany High School following the close of the polls.
- Dr. Dragone has been chosen as the superintendent for the Ballston Spa School District. Mr. Dragone was appointed last evening to this position. Congratulations were extended to Dr. Dragone.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Beverly Padgett read a letter written by her daughter Oceana Morris related to the suspension of students.
2. Beverly Padgett addressed the board regarding the suspension of students and the school budget.
3. Nolene Smith addressed the board regarding the Philip Livingston Magnet Academy.

ROUTINE CONSENT ITEM

Routine Consent Items Appointments (Emergency Conditional Appointments, Probationary Appointments and Independent Contractor – School Physician) and Disposal of Equipment were presented for approval. Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion for approval. Mr. Morris seconded the motion. Mr. Brian Spicer, listed under appointments was introduced.

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

Motion passed.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Academic Intervention Services Plan (AIS)

As a preface to the presentation on the Academic Intervention Plan, the board heard a brief presentation on the Comprehensive District Education Plan. The presentation included a review of charges (Monitor, Facilitate, Communicate). A structure has been created where district wide all of the systems and mandated planning processes are interrelated with CDEP as the governing body with the standing committee reporting to CDEP; mandated state plans are now handled by standing subcommittees, chaired by members of the Office of Instruction and the building improvement plans. This year CDEP reviewed all the building plans. The steering team includes representation by heads of all the associated organizations within the district. Ad-hoc committees focused on program evaluation and district wide issues and there is increased accountability for building improvement and implementation of district plans. A binder containing the above mentioned information was previously distributed to all board members.

The presentation was followed by a very comprehensive presentation of the Academic Improvement Services Plan Overview, including the charge of the CDEP Committee, the eight-month process formulating a task force, conducting the research, delineating the plan and going public. Regulations and Design Standards were reviewed as well as the Model Construct, Forms and Letters, Parent Guide and the Next Steps.

- How are things being done differently with parents? A document will be developed to help both the staff and the parent to use the guide. Information will be provided to the principals that will be included in the fall orientation that will provide AIS information to parents. This does not impact every single parent. The issue of including the parent handbook will be investigated further.
- Where does Supplemental Education Support fit in here? Students are only eligible for SES if the school is in corrective action, which are students at Hackett and Philip Livingston. They are two separate and distinct entities. Students may be eligible for both services.
- More attention needs to focus on the behavioral issues in order to better understand barriers.
- What is the difference between progress reports and report cards? The progress report would be sent home with the report card. The committee is working on having information on the report card that indicates when the student is receiving AIS services.
- Services take place during regular classroom hours? Services are provided differently at each school. There can be extended day programs, tutoring, extended day school program. Students would not be removed from core curriculum classes.
- How does this help the student with low self-esteem? The idea of mentorship is critically important. A customized program to help that student, with everyone working for the betterment of the child, hopefully that would be the first piece, insuring that all obstacles are cleared and the student can focus on the schoolwork.
- Is the communication to parents actually signed by the building administrator? Once the letters are sent how does the district know that the parent received the letter and understands the information. Is there personal contact or follow-up? Principals will be required to sign all forms. The progress report includes a place for the teacher to request a conference and to encourage parents to call if they have questions or concerns. Also follow-up communication with parents will be addressed.
- Do we have the resources to implement the plan? There are some things reflected in this budget plan, i.e. attendance monitor.

The June 3, 2008 board agenda will include this item as an action item for approval.

Guidance Plan

The board heard a presentation including a review of the Comprehensive District Educational Plan and the transition from a Guidance Department to the Counseling Department using components of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model for School Counseling Programs. The presentation was prefaced with an overview of the process, conducted the program review committee members. Information was provided relative to data collection and analysis, an action plan and informational materials including State regulations, an overview of services, a sample newsletter, a description of the School Counseling Advisory Committee and the School Counseling Brochure. Board members received a binder that included the above-mentioned information.

Board members noted their appreciation and gratitude for the efforts of staff in putting these excellent presentations together for this evening. This is very exciting and much needed in terms of creating pathways and breaking down barriers to enable students to reach their full potential while they are in our schools.

- When would the district re-measure where the district is in terms of improvements resulting from these efforts? The first is developing an implementation plan and then to continue to benchmark from there.
- Suggestion was made to set the date for re-measuring now. Data to inform how the district is doing. Work will continue in planning implementation. Within three months from the start of implementation, which is planned for September.
- Hopefully every venue and means of communication will be utilized to get this information to parents.

There is no further action or dialogue necessary in bringing this forward. This does not require formal board adoption. The district will continue to work through the action plans and the implementation.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

In terms of the amount of paperwork that goes forward to board members, it is time to look at laptops. Discussion relative to how the board members would work with this technology.

Research indicates, in most instances, people are unable to read extensive reports on their laptop and ultimately print the items in spite of the technology. This request would require additional discussion relative to the ultimate goal in using laptops. The board will receive a report on the feasibility of this item at a future board meeting.

Adjournment

Mrs. Gaffuri made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Barth seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.