

Regional Board of Superintendents' Meeting

Northern Rhode Island Collaborative
640 George Washington Highway, Suite 200
Lincoln, RI 02865

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Regional Board of Superintendents was held at 640 George Washington Highway, Suite 200, Lincoln, RI, on **Tuesday, July 20, 2010.** The meeting was called to order at 12:40 p.m. by Chair Dr. Donna Ottaviano with a motion by Dr. Morelle seconded by Mr. O'Brien and carried by all.

In addition to Dr. Ottaviano, the following Board members were present: Ms. Cylke, Dr. DiLullo, Dr. Morelle, Mr. O'Brien, and Dr. Pallotta, as well as Julian E. MacDonnell, Jr., Executive Director, Robert Wall, Director of Educational Services, and Craig Enos, Director of Administration. Guests: Attorney Andrew Henneous, Michael Mullane, Field Representative, AFT, Karen Gill, President, NRICEU and several members of the NRICEU.

The Board agreed to take Executive Session out of order:

Executive Session --

Move into Closed Executive Session pursuant to Chapter 42-46-5(a) 1, 2 & 5 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island for legal advice related thereto:

- . NRICEU Negotiations

Dr. Ottaviano, Chair, entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session at 12:41 pm, which was moved by Dr. Morelle, seconded by Mr. O'Brien; and carried by all. No votes were taken during Executive Session.

Dr. Morelle motioned to enter into open session at 1:25 pm, seconded by Mr. O'Brien. A roll call vote was taken and the motion was carried by all.

The Board agreed to take Agenda #6 out of order:

New Business:

6.0 Employment Non-Renewals of Non-Certified Staff for 2010-11

The Executive Director gave Ms. Karen Gill, President of NRICEU, the opportunity to address the Board as follows:

“You may know me from the work I do as a Classroom Teacher at the Collaborative, but I am also the leader of this Union organization. My name is Karen Gill, and I thank you for allowing Mike Mullane and I the opportunity to speak on behalf of the “non-renewals” or in other words terminations being recommended to this Board. Most of who are not here today because they are fulfilling their contractual agreements for the Extended School Year. Most of the terminations are the entire job categories for

Instructional Assistants, Job Facilitators, and Behavior Specialists. This has been done without conferring with the Union. I believe this has been done to conform to the Commissioner's mandate, and the Basic Education Program regulations. Commissioner Gist has stated in a letter dated October 20, 2009, that this work is to be done "with your respective bargaining unit to ensure that you have a system in place for ensuring faculty stability". This has not been done in this manner, or with regards to students' needs. These actions surprise me considering that it is this Board and this Administration that thanked and applauded this Union's efforts to reduce costs to the districts and I quote "save the company" with our concessions for the last two years. Many concessions made effected these job categories the most, so it is truly the Instructional Assistants and other non-certified personnel that helped save this company. The business before you today could be a costly endeavor, especially with regards to unemployment benefits. This Union is presently in negotiations with Administration and entering jointly into mediation. We have yet to even meet in a mediation session as the dates are just getting finalized. We ask this Board to allow us to work together through the negotiation process to determine the system, and that your decisions regarding "non-renewal"/terminations of the non-certified personnel be based on the contract that is in the process of being renewed. We want our staff, within the existing system, to be in place and ready to support the needs of the Collaborative students on September 1st when the doors open for the first day of instruction. This is the most professional, and most stable approach considering the parents and other educational leaders and personnel that stand here with us today."

Mike Mullane, Field Representative from the AFT, also requested an opportunity to address the Board. Mr. Mullane began by thanking the Board for the opportunity to speak with them today and urged them not to proceed with the recommendation to lay off the instructional assistants and other staff members. Mr. Mullane indicated that the 2-year Union contract that expired on June 30, 2010 has clear and specific language on layoffs and recalls in Sections 1 & 4 – lay off by seniority and recall by seniority. For non-certified staff the contract provides for how they are to be laid off. We are currently involved in contract negotiations; the last meeting was on June 23. The Union offered 11 additional dates between May 24 and the end of June. We already had 3 dates set but did not have more. Over those meetings only one additional date was added. On June 23 NRIC moved to mediation and the Union agreed. The mediator was agreed upon as Mr. Vin Ragosta. The first date is July 29th and hope to set additional dates in August. Our goal is to reach a negotiated settlement before the beginning of the school year. We urge you that the appropriate way to handle notification of staff of layoffs per the contract is by seniority. If NRIC lays off all staff, the Union has to exercise their rights by filing a grievance. Mr. Mullane stated that according to the Commissioner's BEP Plan of October, the Commissioner states to work with the bargaining units for a system in place if any changes are needed to comply with the BEP. Mr. Mullane stated that 2 other districts did not change their manner of layoffs or recalls. He gave as an example Central Falls where their procedure is strictly by seniority. They have not changed their procedure. Mr. Mullane also spoke about another component of the BEP that is a work in progress – professional development evaluation and personnel performance. He stated that RIDE has a performance evaluation process and there has been no change in that process. He states that none of the staff in these qualifications have been evaluated over the preceding year. One of the components by the Commissioner that has not been complied with by NRIC. The BEP does not say anything about layoffs or recall

regarding seniority. Mr. Mullane stated that the number of teachers affected by the layoffs is 7. Based upon the ratio of IA's and teachers, the number of IA's to be laid off should be 10-15 not the 38 members that were notified along with the Behavior Specialists and Job Coaches. Based upon all of these reasons, we urge you to reject the recommendations of the Executive Director. Based upon the BEP and the Commissioner, the appropriate thing to do would be to agree to whatever layoffs are necessary. During upcoming mediation, we hope to resolve negotiations by the beginning of the school year.

Speakers concluded at 1:45.

The Executive Director recommended the Board's approval of the employment non-renewals as presented. Dr. Morelle motioned to approve the non-renewal of the listed employees effective August 27, 2010 except two employees' dates noted. The motion was seconded by Dr. DiLullo and was carried by all.

Moved: Dr. Morelle
Seconded: Dr. DiLullo

Approved: Ms. Cylke
Dr. DiLullo
Dr. Morelle
Mr. O'Brien
Dr. Ottaviano
Dr. Pallotta

The Executive Director commented that information will be shared with staff tomorrow regarding available positions based upon the students. There will be a process and informational sessions. We will meet with the Union leadership regarding the job postings.

Routine Matters:

1.0 The Minutes of June 29, 2010

Moved: Dr. Morelle
Seconded: Dr. Pallotta

Approved: Ms. Cylke
Dr. DiLullo
Dr. Morelle
Mr. O'Brien
Dr. Ottaviano
Dr. Pallotta

Appointments:

2.0 Appointment of Beth Pilla, Teacher of the Deaf, Auditory/Oral Program

The Executive Director recommended the appointment of Beth Pilla, as Teacher of the Deaf in the Auditory Oral Program effective school year 2010-11.

Moved: Dr. Morelle
Seconded: Dr. Pallotta

Approved: Ms. Cylke
Dr. DiLullo
Dr. Morelle
Mr. O'Brien
Dr. Ottaviano
Dr. Pallotta

Old Business:

3.0 Strategic Planning – Professional Development – Collaborative Planning

The Executive Director informed the Board that we were notified by Deborah Grossman-Garber of the RI Board of Governors for Higher Education of our Grant Award for Project Success. The amount of the grant for the first year is \$73,000. Planning sessions to begin this week.

4.0 Shared Resources – Northwest School District Consortium

Nothing to report.

New Business:

5.0 Approval of Job Descriptions

The Executive Director reviewed the revised job descriptions for Teacher Assistant and Behavioral Specialist and advised the update was necessary in order to bring them in line with the standards. Mr. MacDonnell requested the Board's approval and after discussion, Dr. Morelle motioned to approve the revised job descriptions for Teacher Assistant and Behavioral Specialist; the motion was seconded by Dr. Pallotta, carried by all.

Moved: Dr. Morelle
Seconded: Dr. Pallotta

Approved: Ms. Cylke
Dr. DiLullo
Dr. Morelle
Mr. O'Brien
Dr. Ottaviano
Dr. Pallotta

7.0 Rescind Employment Non-Renewals for 2010-11

The Executive Director requested the Board's approval to rescind the employment non-renewals of the following personnel for the 2010-11 school year:

<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Physical Therapist</u>
Karen Gill	Mary Shiel L'Esperance .7 FTE

Occupational Therapists
Erin Manchester
Colette O'Brien

Dr. Morelle motioned to approve, which was seconded by Mr. O'Brien, carried by all.

Moved: Dr. Morelle
Seconded: Mr. O'Brien

Approved: Ms. Cylke
Dr. DiLullo
Dr. Morelle
Mr. O'Brien
Dr. Ottaviano
Dr. Pallotta

Information:

Nothing to report.

With no further information to report, Dr. Ottaviano entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:51 p.m., which was moved by Dr. Morelle, seconded by Mr. O'Brien, and carried by all.

Moved: Dr. Morelle
Seconded: Mr. O'Brien

Approved: Ms. Cylke
Dr. DiLullo
Dr. Morelle
Mr. O'Brien
Dr. Ottaviano
Dr. Pallotta

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Donna Ottaviano, Chair