

WILLIAM M. DAVIES, JR. CAREER AND TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL
50 Jenckes Hill Road, Lincoln, RI 02865

Board of Trustees

Minutes of the Regular Meeting

Monday, February 22, 2010

Minutes were accepted at the March 25th Board meeting.

I. Routine

A. **Call Meeting to Order**

At 5:43 p.m., Dr. James Segovis, Chairperson, called the meeting to order.

B. **Roll Call of the Board**

Davies' Executive Assistant called the roll of the Board.

Members Present: Richard Beaupre; Robert Boisselle; James Bone; Raymond Chartier; Lawrence Gemma; Carolyn Hebert; Carolyn Kyle, *Vice-Chairperson*; Paul Ouellette; John Quinn; Dr. James Segovis, *Chairperson*; Robin Smith

Members Absent: Robert Halkyard; John Nardolillo

Others Present: Victoria A. Gailliard-Garrick, Cheryl Carroll, Bernie Blumenthal, Joanne Andrews, Susan Paquin, Gerry Manning, David Champagne, Fred Slemon, Andrea Kelly, William Foley, Jerry Egan, Carolyn Dias

C. **Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Segovis asked for a motion to accept the January 19, 2010 Regular Session minutes. Mr. Bone made the motion; Mrs. Smith seconded the motion; and all were in favor. Minutes approved.

D. **Opportunity for Audience to Comment**

The agenda item "Teachers' Union Perspective to the Race-to-the Top" Initiative, was moved to this point on the agenda prior to going into Executive Session. Mr. Foley, the Davies Teachers' Association President, introduced himself. The local and NEARI have a number of issues relative to this initiative. The first issue was the application itself. The application was put on display for a period of days where they could go down, sign in, get a numbered copy and review it on the premises only. You could take notes if you wanted, but when they were done, they had to turn in that numbered copy, sign out, and leave the room without a copy. This isn't just Mr. Foley, Davies' Union President, it is also NEARI president and legal counsel who had the same restrictions placed on them. They could not leave the premises with a copy of the application.

The second issue is the entire application was not there for inspection. The budget item of the application: where is this 100 million dollars going to be spent,

and how it is going to be spent was not there for them to review. They were being asked to sign onto a document without knowing where the money is going to be allocated.

Another issue is there were a number of items in the application specific to teacher evaluation. Mr. Foley has been union president for just about a year. He was a union president 10 years ago so he isn't new to the process. This past year we had difficult negotiations and all he meant by that is we had budgetary constraints that were unheard of in the last 20 years in this State. We worked through that collaboratively; heated at times, but collaboratively, and two items jump out in his mind. One item would be the teacher evaluation. We haven't made any progress on that but there is a reason for it. One is we agreed that we were going to get together to look at revamping/updating our current teacher evaluation. Once we named our members two things happened. The Dept. of Education had mentioned they want a new teacher evaluation and Providence has been awarded \$225,000-\$250,000 grant to develop one. If they are going to spend all of that money into developing a teacher evaluation tool, it makes sense to see what they come with for all that money before we do one for free. Lets see what that money buys. His point is we worked collaboratively on that in negotiations; we came up with a committee that is going look at that and bring something back to the bodies that we will agree on.

The second piece that came out of negotiations was the Board proposed a "Teacher Excellence" award. We are going to work collaboratively to develop and implement it. That is the essence of collective bargaining. What is proposed in the "Race-to-the-Top" is the antithesis of that. "Well listen; we want a new teacher evaluation tool; there is going to be a rubric; and we want 51% tied into some type of student testing." Looking at the application we asked, "Where is the rubric?" "Oh, we don't have that yet." "What testing are you looking at?" "We are not sure yet." They wanted Davies Local and NEARI to sign onto this. He doesn't know anyone who signs a contract like that.

Another thing we have in our contract is seniority. Not for all positions, but hiring is first based on qualifications and if those qualifications are equal, it is then based on seniority. He did not see this in the application. It was an 80-page document that he got to sit with for 20 minutes. He looked at the piece that is specific to teacher evaluation, teacher performance, and some of the things they were looking at. Everyone sees what is going on in Central Falls and everyone has their own opinion. To look simply at student test scores and say, "Because you have been a failing school (based on their criteria) for the past three years, these are the measures we are going to enforce because we can't come to some agreement." He doesn't see that happening here because of the relationship the union and the board has developed. How can you not take into consideration the students you have in front of you and the baggage and background that they come with. We get students that are four or five grade levels below where they should be in reading and math. He is going to have a hard time getting them up to speed in one year. Say it will take him two years, okay great, but I will get whacked on that. If a student stays back one year, it counts against our graduation rate. We get whacked both ways. As a teacher, as an educator, how do you do that? How do you whack a profession both ways saying, "Well you have to take the kids where they are at, and then you have to work miracles." "If it takes you a little

longer to work that miracle, we are going to hold that against you too.” Because, a student that stays back is considered a dropout even if they graduate from our school in five years. This is why he had a problem with this application.

This Thursday supposedly, Commissioner Gist is meeting with NEARI down at NEARI headquarters with an NEARI petition. All the petition says basically is, “We would like to have an open conversation about this.” All he is reading in the papers is the Commissioner saying she hasn’t heard any complaints. Well there are between 2000-3000 signatures on that petition from teachers statewide that will be presented to Commissioner Gist on Thursday and hopefully we will have an open and forthright conversation because we would love RI to get that grant but we would like to see where that money will be spent. Because we haven’t seen that budget, there is a rumor going around that it is going to fund more charter schools. Again, charter schools are wonderful places. I have support for them up to a point. You can’t keep taking the cream of the crop and preparing apples to oranges. The Met Center and he have always been at odds. If your son or daughter wants to go to the Met Center, you have to sign a contract, the last time he knew, as a parent that you are going to be involved in your son’s or daughter’s education and if you are not that that is grounds for them being exited from the school. Well how can you do that and then tell them that it doesn’t matter whether you have parental support. This is Commissioner Gist in the paper last week, “It doesn’t matter if you have parental support; you have to deal with that student where they are.” Well okay, that is fine, let’s all do that, but don’t set up these other schools, these charter schools or the Met Center, and have them play by different rules and then slap me as a professional in the face because well you can’t do what they can do. He has a problem with that.

Mr. Foley wrapped up by saying that he tried to be as direct and diplomatic as possible to the board on the union’s perspective, at Dr. Segovis’s request and asked if anyone had any questions. Dr. Segovis is looking for a partnership working together and wanted to have an understanding of their perspective. Mr. Beaupre certainly understands their point of view. It’s like flying in the dark. They don’t have all of the facts. It doesn’t seem to be right. Mr. Foley added that NEARI and it’s legal team has offered numerous times to sit down with the Commissioner.

There are two rounds with this application. This is Round One. A decision will be made in April supposedly and a second round is coming up in June. So those states that are not awarded it in April can tweak their application. From what he has read in the papers, union by-in is a key point to add weight to the application. Mr. Beaupre asked Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick if she knew why RIDE didn’t allow anyone to take the application. She said they did not give a reason. Everyone had to follow the review process as Mr. Foley described, but since that time, it was but on RIDE’s website for anyone to review it.

Mrs. Hebert asked if all the elements are now in this document where it can be viewed on-line. Mr. Foley said the application is there but the pieces that he just referenced, i.e, the teacher evaluation tool, is still not there. She then asked if there is a timeline for when those missing pieces will be added. No one knows what is going to come out of this meeting between the Commissioner and NEARI on Thursday. Mr. Bone asked if there is anything from the union stand point that

they need or want from the Board. Dr. Segovis added that the Board did sign on to the application but with questions knowing the teachers would have concerns. It's hard to sign on to something when you don't know how you are going to be evaluated and all of the issues that Mr. Foley raised. The Board understands the union's perspective, but going to the final stages there has to be clarity for everyone even for a parent. The parent doesn't have input into the process as to evaluation and rubrics so that isn't going to fly in another sense. There are many stakeholders that haven't been allowed to see the all of the documents. As the Board gets informed, it will keep the Davies Local informed and in the meantime, keep going on-line to see if any of the missing information has been added. Then wait until the next phase because we will probably be asked to respond again but hopefully not like the first phase with one hour to go.

Dr. Segovis addressed Mr. Egan to see if he was here for the non-renewal notices vote. He was not. Mr. Foley asked him to attend for the Race-to-the Top discussion.

E. **Recess to Executive Session Pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to Discuss Pending Litigation and Personnel Issues**

At 6:27 p.m., Mr. Beaupre made a motion to recess into Executive Session pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to discuss pending litigation and personnel issues. Mr. Bone seconded the motion and all were in favor.

F. **Return to Regular Session**

At 7:48 p.m., Mr. Ouellette made a motion to recess out of Executive Session pursuant to R.I.G.L. 42.46-5 (A) (1) and (2) to discuss pending litigation and personnel issues. Mr. Beaupre seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Dr. Segovis asked for a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session; Mr. Quinn made the motion; Mr. Bone seconded the motion and all were in favor.

In Executive Session we discussed personnel issues and had an informative meeting with Carolyn Dias, RIDE's Chief of Operations, on budgetary issues.

The Board will be holding a strategic retreat and Carolyn Kyle and Dr. Segovis will be inviting some trustees as a steering committee and will be doing an all-day Saturday. Staff will be invited. It sounds like we will need a comprehensive staff and management/board approach given the challenges we will be facing. This will take place some time in March or April. Mrs. Kyle is in contact with a consultant who is very good at strategic retreats and will have to talk to the Director about paying the consultant. The next thing will be coming up with an agenda. Board members will be asked to meet in a less formal way to sketch it out and then ask for the rest of the Board's input. It appears we are heading toward more interesting times with a more fascinating year ahead.

II. Business Agenda

- A. **Finance Report** –Cheryl Carroll, Business Office Coordinator
No report

B. **Human Resources Report** - *Joanne Andrews, Human Resources Coordinator*
No report

C. **Director's Recommendation of Non-Renewal Notices**

Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick, the Director, made a recommendation that we have a total lay-off number of 13 staff members, 8 on the State Operating budget and 5 that are grant funded. She recommended to the Board that they approve her lay-offs for the 2010-2011 school year as explained in Executive Session.

Dr. Segovis asked for a motion to approve the Director's recommendation for 13 lay-off notices; Mr. Quinn moved to accept the recommendation of the Director; Mrs. Kyle seconded the motion; and all were in favor.

The teachers will get the notice the very next day after this meeting, Tuesday, Feb. 23rd, and the letters will go out on Wednesday.

III. Informational Time/Program Updates

A. **Director's Report**

1) **Teachers' Association**—*William Foley, President*
No report

2) **Teacher Assistants' Association** — *Patricia Rose, President*
Mrs. Gailliard-Garrick said the TA contract was signed off and copies have been distributed.

3) **NECAP Fall Testing: ELA/Math** — *Victoria A. Gailliard-Garrick, Director*
(See Supplemental Material: "Fall 2009 Beginning of Grade 11 NECAP Tests-Test Results")

Refer to the supplemental material for the Davies test scores in comparison to the state scores. The Director was happy to report that Davies did very well in the number of proficient in Reading and the biggest gain was in the writing scores. There was a small gain in Mathematics but as you will see it is so throughout the state. Level 1 = Substantially Below Proficient, Level 2 = Partially Proficient, Level 3 = Proficient, and Level 4 = Proficient with Distinction. In Reading, Davies only had 2% Substantially Below Proficient and the other 98% are partially proficient and above. The requirements for graduation in Reading are partially proficient and above so we are doing quite well. In Mathematics we did better than the state with 68% partially proficient and above compared to the state's 56%. In writing Davies is 97% partially proficient and above and the state is at 95%.

As far as the Director is concerned these scores are an excellent improvement. She is happy when she sees just some improvement. When you have six districts coming in here with students at grade levels between 5 and 11, you have to put together a program that is going to increase student improvement at each level, so no matter how small it is, it is still an improvement. The Director had a meeting with the Math Department for quite a long time, and we are looking at the data we have collected to do some redesigning of some of the course offerings. Raising the math scores is a problem nationally.

She will be doing the same thing with the writing even though the NECAP scores increased by 20% in the proficient category this year compared to last year.

4) **Other** – *Victoria A. Gailliard-Garrick, Director*

The Director pointed the Board's attention to the letter in the agenda packet from the Commissioner congratulating us on successfully completing the 2010 Commissioner's Review which means we basically kept our current status as a preliminary approval for the 2010 school year and then we will have a last review in 2012. They commended us on three points: strong leadership and staff commitment to the implementation of the Davies Diploma System; well developed sense of school pride and connectedness throughout the school community; and Davies action plan that addresses self-identified areas of need within the Diploma System. This last point was based on the Director forthright openness. She came right out and told the reviewers the areas we were still weak in and needed improvement. She then supplied them with an action plan explaining the course of action in addressing them. The January Professional Development Day was designed around these issues.

On behalf of the Board, Dr. Segovis commends the school in terms of the improvements in writing, and in the other areas. Our goal is to improve each year so it is about moving forward so he was very excited to see the improvements we made this year.

IV. Adjournment:

At 7:58 p.m., Dr. Segovis asked for a motion to adjourn and all were in favor.