

**Central Falls School District
Board of Trustees
Minutes**

May 16, 2006

I. Call to Order:

The Central Falls School District Board of Trustees Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Chairperson, Mr. Robert Canavan.

Present were: Mr. Robert Canavan, Chairperson

Ms. Ana-Cano Morales

Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado

Ms. Mary Lou Pérez

Mr. Jhomphy Ventura

Mr. Angelo García

Excused was: Mr. Joel Roseman

II. Public Comments:

No public comments

III. Election of Vice-Chair:

Mr. Canavan mentioned that Mr. Joel Roseman, by e-mail, nominated Mr. Angelo García as the Vice-Chair. After checking with the attorney, the nomination was void because Mr. Roseman was not present at the meeting. Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado nominated Ms. Ana Cano-Morales as Vice-Chair. No other nominations were presented, Ms. Ana Cano-Morales accepted. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board. (6-0)

IV. Adoption of Resolution regarding State Special Education Law vs. Federal Law:

Dr. Watkins said that State Special Education Law is more restrictive than Federal Law.

Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado suggested changing to the proper language.

A motion to approve was made by Ms. Mary Lou Pérez seconded by Ms. Ana Cano-Morales.

V. Realignment of facility to accommodate High School Students:

Mr. Canavan stated that the High School is complete and needs between six or eight classrooms that have to come from somewhere.

Dr. Watkins said that by going to block schedule we gained space but not enough.

Mr. Cliff Silvia stated that we gained space with the block schedule to provide more literature and math support. It creates demands on staff and rooms.

Ms. Deborah Zahowski, teacher at Cowden said that they had only seven days to look at it. The planning committee was looking for more space than the real one they needed. The community can have some input.

She suggested the Board to consider Seaton Convent which has been renovated. The 3rd and 4th floor is a beautiful medium size space with 7,000 sq. ft. at \$10 per sq ft. + utilities. It meets fire code. They renovated it because they are anxious to rent it and make accommodations for centers. They are ready to move in.

Mr. Mario Papitto said that the convent was used for Even Start last year. They were nun's rooms.

Dr. Watkins said that it will affect our budget because we do not have the money.

Mr. Angelo García asked the Superintendent if we have looked at renovations for Cowden. Dr. Watkins replied “yes” and it will come from the general fund because we own it.

Michelle Hurley, K- ESL teacher at Cowden said that they spoke with the Director of the Charter School but K can not be on the 4th floor and in Davis they do not have space.

Ms. Kathy Bradshaw, Secretary at the Registration Center said that Cowden Street is not handicapped accessible, and then what is it going to happen. Does this exclude a child because of that?

Mr. Canavan answered that the student who is handicapped will remain at the High School.

Mr. John Kennedy explained that freshman academy will get rid of study hall and will relieve the pressure with alternative programs.

Many questions arose about the new facility for the high school. All the questions were answered by the board, the Superintendent, Mr. John Kennedy and Mr. Cliff Silva. Any renovation that we do at Cowden Street will be reimbursed by the State because we own it.

Dr. Watkins said that Mr. Frank Knott visited the convent and we can not be sole owner because we have to share the space with them on

Saturday and Sunday. Mr. Bob Murray said that Mr. Frank Knott walked through and said that rooms were too small.

Teachers at Cowden Street expressed their concerns and anguishes to the Board and according to Mr. Angelo García that is why it is difficult for the Board to make a decision, but as a Board they have to look at it on a management perspective. Mr. Jhomphy Ventura and Ms. Anna Cano-Morales echoed what Mr. García said but they said “we have to go on”.

Mr. Canavan mentioned that RIDE is demanding this and if this does not happen it will affect the accreditation of the High School.

Ms. Ana Cano-Morales and Mr. Angelo García said that this is a short term goal and we have to solve the problem of the High School for next year because we need to respond to RIDE.

Ms. Mary Lou Pérez said that her son went to many schools. She knew they were in good hands. It does not matter the building. Support from parents, and teachers is what really matters.

Mr. Felix Estrada, President of the PTO at the High School said that a decision has to be made based on the children, the best for them. Overcrowding is a problem that needs to be solved right away. We need space and preparation.

Ms. Cathy Vachon, secretary at Cowden Street asked about clerks' status, and if we changed the name of Cowden it will put her in different position.

Mr. Jhomphy Ventura said that whatever decision we reach it is important for everybody to make this transition as easy as possible. The building is not the magic. Please think of loosing the accreditation for the High School.

Dr. Watkins said "This is a painful time for everybody but as the Superintendent I have the responsibility".

Mr. Canavan said that they needed to approve the Superintendent's recommendation of utilizing Cowden Street as a high school annex.

Ms. Ana Cano-Morales made a regretful motion to approve regretfully seconded by Ana Cecilia Rosado and unanimously approved with regret by the Board.

XI. Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Robert Canavan and seconded by Mr. Angelo García. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.