

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

**June 7, 2006**

**I. Call to Order:**

**The Central Falls School District Board of Trustees Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chairperson, Mr. Robert Canavan.**

**Present were: Mr. Robert Canavan, Chairperson**

**Ms. Anna-Cano Morales**

**Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado**

**Ms. Mary Lou Perez**

**Mr. Joel Roseman**

**Mr. Jhomphy Ventura**

**Mr. Angelo García**

**II. Public Comments:**

**Mr. Ron Trahan, Science teacher at Calcutt and SIT chair spoke on behalf of Ms. Liz Legault. He said that they had a letter with 96 signatures of from Calcutt staff supporting Liz.**

**Ms. Danielle Clarke, presented to the Board the letter signed by 96 Calcutt Staff. She also said that the unsigned letter is not from teachers at Calcutt.**

**Joe Travers, High School teacher said that he has known Liz for 10 years and it would be an atrocity not renewing Ms. Legault's contract.**

**He also asked the Board if they had the list of non renewing personnel.**

**Mr. Bob Canavan answered that it was not on the agenda.**

**Ms. Connie Dube, High School teacher said that Liz Legault has done more for the community than any other principal.**

**Mr. Jerry Lapierre, said that there is no letter and there is no way to support it.**

**Ms. Bibiana Rocha, former student, said that Ms. Legault knows everything about her students and is very supportive of them.**

**Mr. Michael Bedard, bus driver, spoke about student transportation. There has never been a time when they have not been there for the kids.**

**Colonel Joe Moran was there to support Ms. Liz Legault. He said that**

**Ms. Legault takes control of all the students and when police are called to intervene, someone at Calcutt is in charge and takes control, and Liz's interaction with kids is great.**

### **III. Approval of Minutes:**

**Ms. Mary Lou Pérez mentioned that, the May 9 minutes, item c. High School Facility, she made a suggestion of having two members from each school to attend the meeting. She did not say Home School Liaisons. Ms. Mary Lou Pérez also said that she made a motion to seal executive session minutes at 9:50 p.m. on a motion made by Mary Lou Pérez and seconded by Ms. Anna Cano-Morales and voted 7-0. Ms. Mary Lou Pérez made a motion to approve the minutes of May 4, May 9 as amended, May 16 and executive session minutes of May 9. The motion was seconded by Ms. Anna Cano-Morales and unanimously approved by the Board.**

### **III. Schedule of Bills:**

**Dr. Watkins said that there were two dates that were incorrect on the schedule of bills. Ms. Mary Lou Pérez mentioned that there was another date that was incorrect in restricted funds, schedule 26. Mr. Joel Roseman motioned to approve the schedule of bills. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mary Lou Pérez and unanimously approved by**

**the Board.**

#### **IV. Communication:**

**No communications.**

#### **V. Reports:**

**a. Administration: Dr. Watkins thanked the team who organized the High School prom. Dr. Watkins also thanked Ms. Dianne Russel and the PTO at Calcutt for organizing the movie night on Monday and Sue Cranston and Jane Bernardino at the High School for designing the portfolio handbook.**

**b. Chairperson: Pass to later.**

**c. Other:**

**Ms. Mary Lou Pérez said that there are no interested candidates for the openings in the Board of Trustees. Mr. Bob Canavan said that the Board of Regents will nominate two board members (Mr. David Cruise from RIDE and Ms. Sonia Rodrigues-Carr) on June 8 and Ms. Anna Cano-Morales will be the new chair of the Board.**

## **VI. Personnel Matters:**

### **a. Leave of Absence:**

**Joanne Greenleaf is requesting a leave of absence from her Biology position at the high school for the 2006-2007 academic year.**

**Isabelle Lemieux is requesting a parental leave of absence from her DPT position at Calcutt for the 2006-2007 academic year.**

**A motion to approve was made by Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado seconded by Ms. Anna Cano-Morales and unanimously approved.**

### **b. Retirement:**

**Robin Yates – High School Language Arts Chairperson after 34 years of service effective on June 30, 2006**

**Cheryl McNamara, Grade 1 teacher at Feinstein School after 30 years of service effective June 23, 2006.**

**Lora Kosten, Principal at Ella Risk School will be retiring after 29 years of service effective June 30, 2006.**

**Nancy McDonald, Guidance Secretary at the High school after 31 years of service effective June 30, 2006.**

**Virginia Benoit, Grade 1 Mainstream Teacher at Robertson school after 32 years of service will be retiring on June 23, 2006**

**A motion to approve was made by Mr. Angelo García seconded by Mr. Jhomphy Ventura and unanimously approved.**

**Ms. Mary Lou Pérez mentioned that she was Ms. Lora Kosten and Mr. Yates's student and they will be seriously missed.**

#### **VII. Appointments:**

**Dr. Watkins recommended that the following appointments be made:**

**Kelly Bryce – Resource Teacher – Calcutt MS/Out of District -  
Effective: April 24, 2006**

#### **VIII. Approval of Appointments:**

**Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado motioned to approve. The motion was**

**seconded by Ms. Mary Lou Pérez and unanimously approved by the Board.**

## **IX. New Business:**

### **a. High School Schedule Tentative Agreement**

**Dr. Watkins informed the board that the schedule developed by the Teachers' Union is what is going to be effective next school year.**

**Ms. Anna Cano-Morales motioned to approve. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado and unanimously approved by the Board.**

### **b. K-Report Card Proposal:**

**Teachers at Captain Hunt requested to table this item for next month's meeting because they wanted to review and needed more time.**

### **c. 9th grade academy**

**Dr. Watkins said that the purpose of the 9th grade academy is to build a strong foundation.**

**Mr. Gerry Manning said that the draft the Board had is the collaboration of 14 people and the work performed over four (4) months. We tried to include best practices for the learning communities, advisory, etc. We are moving towards implementation for next year. It has more work to negotiate at district level and with the Teachers' Union regarding budget, schedule, curriculum, staffing, etc. We will continue to enhance the 9th grade program for next year. Teaming is an important component of this document.**

**Several questions arose from this topic and Mr. Gerry Manning answered them. Ms. Anna Cano-Morales wanted to know if the draft had been presented to RIDE. Mr. Manning answered that not yet. Mr. Manning acknowledged the team that helped in this process.**

#### **d. Lower School Academy**

**Mr. Canavan said that he did not like the name of "Lower". It will be misinterpreted. Dr. Watkins explained that in education the terms of Lower House and Higher house exist. Dr. Watkins also said that a year ago the district started looking for an alternative program for students. Ms. Carolyn Roseman started the initial research and investigation to implement the program in the district. She visited several schools in Connecticut. We were not successful implementing the program for several reasons, among them the lack of location and staffing, now with Cowden Street we have the space**

**and we have to implement the program and accelerate the learning of students that are behind.**

**Mr. Dan Davis said that Lower School is for students who have not been successful. We will have our own reading specialist. We are trying to formulate a community center. This is not an autonomous school; we remain part of the High School. The teachers will come from the High School. We will have a little different professional development because these kids may not react very well to this traditional teaching method. It will be presented to RIDE next week.**

**Mr. Joel Roseman said that behavior kids should not be put into the program. He is really concerned about the kids well being. We need great teachers to make this program work.**

**Ms. Mary Lou Pérez asked if everything is going to be transferred from the High School to the annex. Mr. Dan Davis answered that we will take what is needed. Some items will be shared back and forth.**

**Mr. Angelo García suggested going to Channel One and use them. They have lots of resources in the Community Center to help kids be successful.**

**Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado suggested changing the name of “Academic Academy” because it sounds redundant.**

**Mr. Jhomphy Ventura said that he knows the importance and benefits of art program because it reinforces critical thinking. We need to make arts part of the curriculum.**

**e. Compensatory Services in the Absence of Service Provider**

**Dr. Watkins informed the board that the Office of Civil Rights made some minor changes to the policy approved in the last monthly board meeting.**

**Mr. Joel Roseman suggested putting the date on the revised one.**

**f. Central Falls School District Field Trip Procedure**

**Dr. Watkins said that we have a more clear form for the field trip requests.**

**Mr. Joel Roseman suggested putting the approval date on the form and begin using the most recently revision.**

**Ms. Mary Lou Pérez asked what \$25 was, on page 3 of the procedure. Dr. Watkins answered that it should read \$25 per hour.**

## **g. High School Schedule**

**Dr. Watkins acknowledged Mr. John Kennedy and his administrative team for their hard work to finish the schedule.**

**Mr. John Kennedy said that the High School schedule is about 90% completed and has not been finished yet because the software was not working. It will be presented to RIDE next week. He also mentioned that they are looking at an increase in Portuguese classes, Calculus, and Trigonometry.**

**Ms. Jane Sessums said that she has been meeting with John on a regular basis to work on the schedule. Mr. John Kennedy informed that the Board that the Jump Start program will require new teachers and Dr. Watkins has informed RIDE of the need of staff. The schedule includes the 9th grade academy.**

**Mr. Joel Roseman said that the sooner we advertise the vacancies the better.**

## **h. Request from City-Approval of Easement-Cowden Street**

**Mr. Smith from the City of Central Falls explained to the board that the city needs to make an addition to the Community Center-Channel One. They need a location for the transformer and will need the whole parking lot. It will be a temporary construction operation and**

**the city needs the district support.**

**Dr. Watkins said that the Board has to look at the consequences. We will lose the playground space permanently.**

**Mr. Bob Murray said that we have a lease for 99 years on Cowden Street building with the dioceses of Providence.**

**Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado inquired if we had any safety concerns. Mr. Smith replied that they will put an 8 ft. fence. Mr. Joel Roseman suggested enclosing it so kids can not climb it.**

**Dr. Watkins asked when construction would begin. Mr. Smith answered that by the end of June or mid July and it will take between 30 to 45 days.**

**Attorney Piccirilli said that he will check the contract.**

**Mr. Joel Roseman motioned to approve but expressed concerns about safety issues and the final approval will be after seeing at the final design. Motion to approve with amendment by Joel Roseman and seconded by Ms. Anna Cano-Morales. Six approved, one extension, Mr. Angelo Garcia (because it is his building).**

## **i. School Bus Outsourcing**

**Dr. Watkins said that the Board asked the administration to look into outsourcing buses, she gave it to finance to research. We are requesting permission to create an RFP.**

**Motion to approve by Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado. The motion was seconded by Ms. Anna Cano-Morales and approved by all.**

### **Chairperson report:**

**Mr. Bob Canavan said that he was a pleased to serve this community and the school department for the past three years and wished the board and the Superintendent good luck. He thanked Mr. Joel Roseman for his services and wisdom.**

**Attorney Piccirilli said that he suggested discussing an anonymous letter that Dr. Watkins received about Liz Legault in executive session but Ms. Legault chose to have it in public meeting. Attorney Piccirilli said that Ms. Legault, her attorney and the Board Members could speak. The letter said “There is a rumor that Ms. Legault will no longer be serving as principal next year....because her contract is not**

being renewed” and “... there are many teachers at Calcutt that WOULD agree with not renewing her contract.” “Unfortunately we can not exercise this view openly because of the possible ramifications that would occur from such statements.”

Ms. May Ann Carroll, Ms. Legault’s attorney thanked the board for giving them the opportunity to be heard. Ms. Carroll said that anonymous letters should be thrown to the basket. Ms.

Legault is a valuable employee in the City of Central Falls for over 12 years; she is a strong leader and a strong woman, she is respected by faculty, parents and students. She is here for the children of Central Falls. Why the letter? Who is responsible to this letter? She has signed statements regarding the fact the Superintendent has called Ms. Legault a racist.

Mr. Piccirilli reminded her to stop her comments and keep on the purpose of the discussion.

Ms. Carroll continued saying that she had an affidavit signed by most of the teachers and she believes most of them. It shows that her staff supports her. She asked the board to support her and renew her contract. Mr. Piccirilli said that Ms. Legault’s contract was not in jeopardy.

Mr. Canavan said that he had asked the Superintendent if all the contracts had been sent and she had replied yes, then he assumed all

**the contracts were sent to all principals.**

**Mr. Joel Roseman said that a letter without date and signature is worth nothing.**

#### **X. Executive Session:**

**At 8:44 p.m. a motion was made by Mr. Angelo García to move to Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado. A roll call vote was taken and so it was unanimously approved.**

**Mr. Canavan reconvened the public meeting at 9:11 p.m. The motion to reconvene the public meeting was made by Ms. Mary Lou Pérez seconded by Mr. Angelo García. A roll call vote was taken so it was unanimously approved.**

**A motion to seal the minutes was made by Mr. Joel Roseman and seconded by Ms. Mary Lou Pérez and unanimously approved.**

#### **XI. Adjournment:**

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Jhomphy Ventura and seconded by Mr. Joel Roseman. The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 p.m.**