

Edited 9/20/06

Central Falls School District

Board of Trustees

Minutes

August 15, 2006

I. Call to Order:

The Central Falls School Board of Trustees Meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chairperson, Ms. Anna Cano-Morales.

Present were: Ms. Anna Cano-Morales, Chairperson

Mr. Angelo Garcia, Vice-Chairperson

Ms. Mary Lou Perez, clerk

Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado

Ms. Sonja Rodrigues-Carr

Mr. Jhomphy Ventura

Mr. David Cruise

II. Approval of Minutes:

Mr. David Cruise made a motion to approve the minutes of July 20, 2006 and also the executive session minutes of June 7, 2006 and July 20, 2006. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mary Lou Perez and unanimously approved by the Board.

III. Schedule of Bills:

Ms. Sonja Rodrigues-Carr made a motion to approve the bills as schedules, motion seconded by Ana Cecilia Rosado, and unanimously approved by the Board.

IV. Communications:

Resignations: The following staff submitted letters of resignation.

Ms. Maria Duque, Executive Secretary to the Superintendent, effective August 11, 2006.

Ms. Bernadette Kelly, Library Secretary for Ella Risk and Robertson Schools, effective July 25, 2006.

Mr. Peter N. Wood Jr., Data Coordinator, effective August 11, 2006

Ms. Beth Pavao, 7/8 ESL Math Teacher for Calcutt MS, effective August 8, 2006.

Ms. Perez made a motion to accept the resignations, seconded by David Cruise. Mr. Angelo Garcia asked what a Data Coordinator's role was and the head of the technology department elaborated on the

role of the Data Coordinator and its connection with RIDE.

Ms. Perez had made a correction on her motion and voice that she needed to make a motion to place these letters under personnel matters, where they can be approved at a under the agenda item “Personnel Matters”. Mr. Piccirilli confirmed that correction and motion was so moved.

V. Reports:

a. Administrative: Mr. Mario Papitto had informed the board that the first Teacher Orientation is scheduled for August 29th, followed by the Teachers Professional Development Day on the 30th of August and he asked that Patricia Morris elaborate on the activities that will take place on PDA. The High School had planned their own Professional Development on Behavioral Support for Students through a committee that was created and working since last spring to develop treatment plans using positive behavioral supports and discipline with dignity. The Middle School is continuing their work with Turning Points. The Elementary Schools, grades 3-5, are working on NECAP Preparation Curriculum. Grades K-2 are doing session with response to intervention in AM and having a session in PM on differentiating instruction.

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Mr. Papitto talked out the buildings and the amount of work that is

being done and how the custodians are working feverishly so that they are ready for opening day. Frank Knotts gave a briefing and confirmed that the schools will be ready and operational for opening day. There has been a lot of reconstruction going on at the High School for a new sprinkler system entailing repairs and sanding. Meeting with contractors on Thursday to inform them when they will need to stop and leave the building. Captain Hunt is going through the same thing with fire alarm people; deadline was the end of the last school year now they are working second shifts to complete the project. Feinstein has a new sprinkler system being put in and in September new water lines need to be put in before the ground freezes. Cowden Street School has new furniture being put in and almost done there.

Ms. Perez has voiced concern on the amount of piping and other things that are in the hallways at the High School and asked why it looks that way so late in the summer. Mr. Knotts explained that during the construction a few classrooms needed to be repaired due to the plaster being knocked out because of the piping for the sprinkler system needing to be put through and now new plastering needs to be put in to repair the damage. Fire alarm system started the 26th of June and sprinkler people came 3 weeks late and now they are trying to catch up now. Four people have been doing that and they still have to test the system. Now there are people working 2nd shift to get the work done.

Mrs. Morales had concerns with the breaking of walls and signs of asbestos. Mr. Knotts voiced that all these company should be trained in all that. Mrs. Morales asked if we are asking the contractors to give us a clearance on the air quality in writing. Mr. Knotts will ask the contractors to provide us with that information.

Mr. Papitto was told by the state, that the primaries are on September 12th and are schools need to be closed and that on our school calendar for 2006-2007, does not reflect that closure.

Mr. Papitto congratulated the staff at the high school for work that they did during summer school session and 11th of August graduated 13 students from the program.

Ana Rosado asked if there will be no school on September 12th, will that day be made up at the end of school, and the answer was yes.

b. Chairperson: Ms. Anna Cano- Morales explained that they are still working on the budget with Todd Flaherty, Mary Canole and how they met 2 times already. We have a substantial deficit. All have been creative and resourceful and realistic. This is a tough financial year for the district and for the State of RI. RIDE has been supportive to make sure that all programs are in place to make useful choices with the amount of funds that we have. Last 2 months have been busy. Ms. Morales and Mr. Garcia met with the mayor regarding establishing a meaningful relationship. We are on the agenda for the

city council meeting on the 28th, where we will give them an update on situation on the budget and the transitional leadership as well. Ms. Morales has also met with the city council members and Mr. Joe Faria and thanked him for fighting for us at General Assembly. She met with Rep. Issa and was glad to hear from the board. She is also meeting with the media especially with Tatiana Pina, about public education. Ms. Pina is a journalist for the Providence Journal and also represents the Latin community as well. The most recent news in the media entailed a possible new interim superintendent for the district, Dr. William Holland, who the board will take a vote on his appointment later in the meeting. Mrs. Morales continued to elaborate on Dr. Holland and shared with the board and the public Dr. Holland work history.

c. Other: None

VI. Personnel Matters:

a. Leave of Absence

Candace Mendes has requested a 4 month parental leave of absence from her position as a Special Education Teacher at Calcutt Middle School; she has requested to return on January 2, 2007.

Claudine Osko has requested a leave of absence from her position as 6th grade teacher at Calcutt for the 2006-2007 school year.

b. Resignation:

Maria Duque has submitted her resignation from her position as Executive Secretary to the Superintendent of Schools effective August 11, 2006.

Bernadette Kelly has submitted her resignation from her position as Library Secretary for Ella Risk and Robertson Schools effective July 25, 2006.

Peter N. Wood Jr. has submitted his resignation from his position as Data Coordinator effective August 11, 2006.

Ms. Beth Pavao has submitted her resignation from her position as 7/8 ESL Math Teacher for Calcutt MS effective August 8, 2006.

c. Retirement:

Maryllane Almeida has submitted her letter of retirement effective July 5, 2006 from her teacher assistant position as Cowden Street School.

Hugh Glancy has notified the school district that he has retired from his position as custodian of Capt. Hunt School effective August 3, 2006.

d. Appointments:

See agenda item VIII. Approval of appointments

Ms. Rosado made a motion to approve the leave of absence, resignations and retirements, seconded by David Cruise and so it was unanimously voted by the board.

VIII. Approval of Appointments:

Mr. Papitto made a recommendation that the Board of Trustees give consent to the following appointment made by the Assistant Superintendent:

Dr. William Holland, Superintendent of Schools effective August 21, 2006.

Mr. Cruise made a motion to accept the recommendation for appointment, seconded by Ms. Perez. Under discussion, Ms. Rosado asked how an Assistant Superintendent appoint a School Superintendent. Mr. Todd Flaherty was able to explain how through RIDE process. And so it was unanimously voted by the board, 7-0.

Dr. Holland was able to address the public and the board. Dr. Holland is always interested in a challenge and is happy to accept to this position. He elaborated on what his plans will be to help turn the district around, including bringing together the reports that were

down and establishing goals for the district.

Revised 09/21/06

IX. New Business:

a. Budget

Todd Flaherty met with administrator and discussed figures and what possibly to cut, operations and personnel. We are under 1.8 million. In 2 weeks we will receive recommendation from administration. A special meeting with the board of trustees should be scheduled on 29th to discuss the budget, which includes hiring and possible terminating.

b. "Section 125 Premium Only Plan"

Mr. Murray had addressed the board on the Section 125 plan which comes from the IRS terminology. The plan enables the school district for any employees that have to pay medical insurance costs and all we are adopting is the insurance portion only. They can take that payment and put it into a cost share. They will pay with tax free dollars. This does not affect their benefit. This is not a flexible spending account.

This is no cost to the district. There is a slight cost to administrator. It only affects those people who have that cost sharing plan. All

employees are eligible.

Mr. Ventura had voiced that he is has always been in favor of something of this nature having done insurance for 12 years. There are things that he voiced concerns with and that is those individuals that switch in the middle of the plan and how it would affect them with this plan. He asks that there be proper education that goes with this plan and that the individuals are told of what the Section 125 consist of.

The benefits are part of collective bargaining and they will not be affected by this plan.

A unanimous vote from the board was taken to adopt the Section 125 plan, and so it voted 7-0.

c. School Bussing Policy (Draft)

Mr. Papitto informed the board that this policy was adopted on 7/22/1986. With some addition, we ask that this is just a draft. Mr. Morales had spoken to Mr. Murray and Mr. Piccirilli about Transportation in general and how we are operating and cost effectiveness, whether we are going to outsource next year. As drafted, it puts it on the table in fact that the board should pay attention to this policy. A larger conversation on the transportation will need to take place and at the present time it is too premature to take action at this point.

Ms. Rosado had asked if this policy, since adopted in 1986, has been followed. It has been followed per Mr. Knotts. He has received 180 requests for transportation since he has been in his position. People who have moved from one end of the city to the other, the parents still want their children to go to the school where they were last and will call transportation department to transport their children to their last school. With kindergarten, they transport from all over the city and bring them to those locations. We do transport students who live beyond the ½ mile radius or those students who have medical concerns. With the mobile population, it does become a problem.

Mr. Garcia had asked the Registration staff if they have seen an increase in that requests from individuals coming into the city for the 1st time. Ms. Raposa had seen an increase with individuals coming in.

Mrs. Morales has seen the letter that went out to address the redistricting of the students and informing parents that transportation will no longer be available for that student. Mrs. Morales is hoping that the message is going out about the situation.

d. “Jump Start Academy” Update:

Mr. Manning had confirmed Mr. Knotts previous statement regarding the completion of the building. So far 90% is completed. Work needs

to be still in the library, lockers, white board, office stuff, etc. Building is looking great. Letters to parents with students who will be participating in Jump Start Academy will be going out tomorrow (8/16) and will be meeting with parents next week to address concerns, tour the facility, and explain the program. Math Dept had PDA 8/15 & 8/16. Met with the staff a few weeks ago to make sure all are on the same page and set the tone. By weeks end, hope to be located there with an advisory team to look at the list of students and try to group kids that would work well together.

Ms. Rosado had asked about the process used to select the teachers who will be teaching at the Academy. Mostly the new teachers who are not on the seniority list and those that chose to go there. It's a lot of younger staff, with some fresh ideas, lots of flexibility and desire to be involved with the kids whose needs are very special.

Mr. Garcia has voiced concern that at the time of the orientation that the students are made aware of the physical aspects of their environment, specifically with the young students at the registration center and the seniors at the Community Center.

Mrs. Morales has also suggested that Mr. Manning make contact with the media and do a story about the Jump Start Academy putting it in a positive light and keeping the parents informed. The model of the Jump Start Academy should be made aware publicly and how it fits with urban education and what will it do for the self identity of the

kids and how they transition in and out of the Academy. It needs to be made transparent.

Mr. Manning believes the students are going to enjoy it there and they are going to see the value of smaller environment and personalization that they would want to stay and it's not an alternative program that they can finish the 4 years there, it is meant to be a short time program.

e. High School Update

Mr. Kennedy had updated the board on the high school. He reviewed the package that the board received which consisted of the bell schedule and professional development and advisory day. Block schedule will be taken affect at the opening of school day.

A guidance counselor has been working on new schedules which include those individuals who completed summer school so numbers are starting to increase in the classroom.

Jobs looking for:

In English- A department Chair, Reading specialist, and English literacy coach

In ESL- Combining ESL foreign language in own department and conduct interviews for a department chair.

In Business- classes are being doubled which as affecting the enrollment numbers in elective classes because students will need to take double Math and double English due to test scores.

In Science- Need 1 full time science teacher and are ready for a recommendation for that position and tomorrow setting up interviews for a social studies position.

In Math- In need of 2.67 teachers. .67 from recent contract negotiations where teachers will be teaching less, math coach and math director, so that bring us to two classes/semester which works out at 2/3rd. The other 2 is due to the expansion of the math program.

The Social Studies position is a .5 position and interviews are set for tomorrow. This was identified last year.

Arts and Technology Department- one of the elective classes has been affected due to the business department. They will be small classes.

Physical Department-numbers are extremely high. Need 1 teacher for PE and Health.

Special Ed Department- there is a need for 2 more Special Ed teachers. There are 31 inclusion classes this year, where 2 years ago there was 8 to 23 last year and now 31.

Jump Start Academy- need 1 math teacher, a science teacher but the one that was going to be recommended already has taken another position elsewhere, so now that position will be advertised again.

Elective position and will be posting that one for a music teacher. We have 98 students currently and need 120. We will adjust the criteria to meet that number. Initially planned on 9th and 10th graders going to the Academy but we now have some who need 11th grade English and the change of an 11th grade English class will be added, so that

now we have 9th, 10th and some 11th graders there.

Mrs. Morales had voiced that not all positions are guaranteed to be filled due to the budget. So we need to look at the right person according to the needs of the students.

Ms. Perez voiced concern regarding the scheduling at the HS and what was said earlier by Mr. Kennedy was that a guidance counselor was working on the schedules. Mr. Kennedy voiced that the schedules are done, but modifications are being done to reflect the students that completed the summer school program. Ms. Perez also asked why schedules aren't mailed to the students homes. Is it easier for the student to come to the school? The student will get their schedule in their homeroom as well as a package to bring home.

f. Ratification of Collective Bargaining Agreement with Local 1627 AFSCME:

Mr. Piccirilli had asked that this agenda item be tabled for the next meeting due to the union has not had the opportunity to vote on it. The agenda item will be tabled until August 29, 2006.

X. Public Comments:

Mrs. Morales had asked if anyone from the public wishing to address

the board may do so at this time. There was none.

XI. Executive Session:

Mr. Garcia made a motion to move to Executive Session pursuant to Chapter 42-46-5 (a) 1 & 2 of the RIGL (Personnel) (Collective Bargaining) (Grievance) and (Litigation) at 8:05 p.m., seconded by Ms. Ana Cecelia Rosado. A roll call vote was taken and so it was voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

XII. Public Meeting Reconvened and Adjournment:

Mr. David Cruise made a motion to reconvene to public session at 9:10pm, seconded by Sonja Rodrigues Carr, and so it was voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Mr. David Cruise made a motion adjourn the meeting at 9:10pm, seconded by Ms.

Ana Cecilia Rosado, and so it was voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.