

Central Falls School District
Board of Trustees
Minutes
6:00 PM

September 8, 2009

I. Call to Order:

Chairperson, Ms. Anna Cano-Morales called the Central Falls School District Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Present were: Ms. Anna Cano-Morales, Chairwoman
Ms. Sonia Rodrigues, Vice Chairwoman
Ms. Mary Lou Perez, Clerk
Ms. Leslie Estrada
Mr. BK Nordan

Not Present: Mr. Vladimir Ibarra
Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado

II. Pledge:

Pledge of Alliance

III. Recognition

Jesus Romero received his Central Falls High School diploma after completing U.S. History in the summer with Mr. Andrew Benn. Mr. Benn showed the Board members Romero's final project. The Board congratulated him on his accomplishment.

IV. Policy and Planning:

A. Evaluation Protocols

Superintendent Gallo presented the ePortfolio for school leaders to the Board. It is a web-based system that combines the integration of technologies, scholarship, teaching, and service. The framework allows school leaders the opportunity to add performances and artifacts to their ePortfolio. Users can electronically collect multiple instances of their work, all tied directly to standards. The tool is very similar to what the students are required to do with their portfolios.

Dr. Gallo informed the Board that Mike Lauro had been instrumental in researching this as well as connecting with RIDE on the leadership grant. Iowa College of Education had a similar program. Administrators from Iowa met with Central Falls administrators in June sharing their portfolio, leadership standards-based system teaching them how to organize and upload their artifacts.

Each principal, assistant principal and some central office staff will be asked to develop three main goals that would dovetail with the district strategic plan. They are being asked to consider the academic, the instructional integrity, and the community goal and to do what is called reflective practice.

On a monthly basis administrators would be asked to select one item for reflection and through the intranet Dr. Gallo would be able to view the sites to look at the goals and artifacts of work across the

standards. The Board will also have access to the information for the Superintendent so that they may review her work in more depth. The first quarter will be for setting of goals and the next three will be for the continuous review and/or for continued dialogue for improvement.

There were three districts, Central Falls, Woonsocket and Providence that were participating in the grant. Central Falls implemented this system on time and on budget.

Action: Informational Only

B. Seven Facilities Policy and Operations Prerequisites – first reading

The district was asked to join with RIDE in applying for an EPA Grant. Through Mike Lauro's research, the district has three proposed policies that match. They are School Bus Idling Policy, the Energy Star Efficiency Purchasing Policy, and the Basic Refrigerant Management Policy. Without those policies in place it would be less likely to receive the grant. Many of the other pieces are already in place. (These documents are attached)

Action: First reading, no vote.

V. Consent Agenda:

Consent agenda included the Board minutes from the August 17, 2009 meeting. It also included the following personnel matters.

Appointments

Certified Staff

Judith Greenberg – Reading Specialist, Central Falls High School

John Mead – Math Teacher, Central Falls High School

Vanessa Soito – Guidance Counselor, Elementary District

Jonathon Passarelli – Physical Education, District

Tara Lucier – Psychologist, District

Anthony Kulla – Math Teacher, Central Falls High School

Resignations

Michael Bedard – Bus Driver, District

A motion to approve the August minutes and the personnel matters was made by Ms. Rodrigues and seconded by Ms. Estrada. The Board approved the consent agenda, 5 to 0.

VI. Superintendent's Report:

A. Update on School Opening

TALL University students gave the Board and all those in attendance a performance that reflected the types of assemblies that they had been doing within the district and outside of the district. Dr. Gallo also informed the board of the Everett Dance Theatre Science Show assemblies regarding light and how a location that was dark enough to hold them was being sought. Throughout the summer sessions for K-5 students, TALL also did similar assemblies. The theme was healthy eating and TALL taught the students vocabulary words related to the theme. The Democracy Prep teachers who visited the district were also able to see one of those assemblies.

B. Commissioner Visit

The Commissioner visited on the first day of school. She went to each of the schools as well as to Central Office. She was able to speak with administrators and to visit classrooms. Dr. Gallo informed the Board that the teachers are always well prepared and that they were able to show it.

Ms. Cano-Morales commented that she was in attendance for the Veterans Elementary School tour and noticed that there was a very warm and welcoming environment. She felt that the Commissioner walked away from the tours with a feeling of family and culture that is in Central Falls.

Dr. Gallo commented that was also evident when she was asked to go to RIDE for a full-day Think Tank. Family was discussed and how the district is building that up through parent councils and open forums among other things. Dr. Gallo stated that the district can be advocates and can teach advocacy. Students are also advocating for their education. Students presented at the Board of Regents and spoke about the COOL program, which is active, thematic learning that is relevant.

The Commissioner's upcoming visit would be on September 24 to the Central Falls High School and to Veterans Elementary School. Dr. Gallo informed the Board that the Commissioner's Strategic Plan would be on the RIDE web site for them to view.

Ms. Rodrigues was glad that the Commissioner was visiting and that the Board, as well as other members of the community, would have some time to speak with her but she also wanted to have some time set up for the full Board to meet with the Commissioner for a face-to-face. Dr. Gallo commented that she felt that it was a good idea to have that type of meeting to help foster even greater understanding of the school district.

C. Facilities Update

Dr. Gallo commented that the Facilities Committee was convening an official meeting on September 17 at 1:00 PM at City Hall on the third floor. Representatives from the District would be the Superintendent, Giovanna Venditti, Kathy Gaouette, Mike Lauro, Ed Vandette and Mario Papitto, as well as Sonia Rodrigues as representation from the Board. Various topics would be discussed and they are open meetings.

D. Pre-Kindergarten Demonstration Project

The project was starting at Progreso Latino and there were several families that applied. RIDE is conducting all of the tests and selecting students by a lottery process. It is due to start on September 14. It is by the use of the district's grant funding that the project can be funded.

In addition, Blue Cross and Stop & Shop teamed up to paint different themes for the three classrooms and the hallways for the incoming students.

E. AFT Innovation Fund Proposal

Dr. Gallo informed the Board that Jane Sessums and other union leaders from Providence, Woonsocket and Providence submitted an AFT Innovation Fund Proposal to the national AFT. This proposal is to design and implement a common evaluation system which will dramatically change the way the Rhode Island educators are evaluated and supported. Dr. Gallo, as well as the other urban Superintendents, gave a letter of support. The grant was submitted to the National AFT. Jane Sessums informed the Board that there were originally 115 proposals, which were then cut to 15 and the two finalists will be announced on September 22. The grant is for \$200,000.

Ms. Cano-Morales commented that the grant also put the District in good standing for the Race to the Top funding [Race to the Top Fund provides competitive grants to encourage and reward States that are creating the conditions for education innovation and reform; implementing ambitious plans in the four education reform areas].

Dr. Gallo informed the Board that there are also innovation grants that districts can apply for and the District will be applying for them. This will include the State's proposal dovetailed by the districts proposals.

VII. Public Comment:

No public comment.

VIII. Next Board Meeting:

Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 13, 2009 at 6:00 PM.

X. School Board Comment/Communication:

Ms. Estrada commented that for the first time her son had a list of school supplies. She was happy that this was part of the Academies and hoped it would continue moving forward. She also noticed that he had homework assignments early in the school year. His first assignment was an essay and he chose to write about his experience as a mentor for the SCOPE program, COOL. She commented that many of the students from the program still have a good relationship with her son, which is important. As a parent she feels that everything is coming together at the high school.

Dr. Gallo commented that nearly 100 high school students were able to work in different programs over the summer.

Ms. Perez commented that she was glad to know that there are cameras at the high school.

Dr. Gallo informed the Board that the cameras had been received last year and were finally installed in the corridors, stairwells, and doorways.

Ms. Rodrigues commented that she had attended the Board of Regents meeting and had spoken as well. She wanted it to be put in for public record. She also suggested that the Board consider having working sessions so they could have more time for discussion.

Dr. Gallo agreed to a communication to see who could attend a work session and on what dates.

XI. Executive Session and Adjournment of public session:

Ms. Cano-Morales asked for a motion to go into executive session pursuant to chapter 42-46-5(a)(1) for the superintendent evaluation and pursuant to chapter 42-46-5(a)(2) litigation regarding job fair. Ms. Estrada motioned to go into executive session and Ms. Perez seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and was unanimous, 5 to 0.

Ms. Cano-Morales noted for the public that the Trustees would not reconvene into public session.