

Central Falls School District Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2010
6:00 p.m.
Central Falls High School - Auditorium

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairperson, Ms. Anna Cano-Morales called the Central Falls School District Board of Trustees Meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

Present were: Ms. Anna Cano-Morales, Chairwoman
Ms. Sonia Rodrigues, Vice Chairwoman
Ms. Mary Lou Perez, Clerk
Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado
Ms. Leslie Estrada (6:33 PM)

Not Present: Mr. Vladimir Ibarra (excused absence)
Mr. B.K. Nordan

II. Pledge

III. Recognition

A video was shown of the Central Falls students that participated in the Bryant games to recognize the hard work of both the students and the coaches.

IV. Policy and Planning

A. Request for Bio Blitz

Teacher Stephanie Racine submitted a proposal to the Board regarding the Bio-Blitz 2010 overnight trip for students. She explained that the students would be working with scientists from all over the United States, URI and Roger Williams Zoo for 24 hours to count as many species they can that live in Rhode Island. The data is tallied and collected for the Rhode Island Natural History Survey. This year's survey will take place on Block Island. She stated that the students were in 7th and 8th grade and that there were 12 who would be attending the trip.

Action: The request was endorsed.

B. Academic Calendar 2010-2011

The Central Falls Teachers' Union had one change to the draft calendar. The draft calendar had December 23rd as a school day and the last day of school was for June 15th. The change would be to have December 23rd be the beginning of the winter break and to have June 16th be the last day of school.

Dr. Gallo told the Board that the next calendar item to approve would be the Board's meeting calendar, which would include two meetings per month—regular and work session meetings.

There was a brief discussion regarding the proposed changes.

Ms. Rosado suggested that the vacation schedule be reviewed for the 2011-2012 academic year. She suggested forming a committee to look into how other districts and countries create their academic calendars and vacation days.

Ms. Cano-Morales did state that she believed that the vacations were set for whole state and that for the most part the districts had to stay within those parameters. The Board agreed that it would be a good idea to do some research on the topic.

Action: Motion to approve made by Ms. Rodrigues and seconded by Ms. Perez.
Approved 4, 0

C. RTTT Application – approval vote for signatures from Board Chair and Superintendent

The presentation began with a video from Ms. Gist regarding the Race To the Top (RTTT) second round application. The information contained in the video was shown in order to explain what Race to the Top is, what Rhode Island's educator evaluation system will do, and what it means to “sign on” to the district Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). The video can be seen in its entirety at www.ustream.tv/recorded/6819794.

After viewing the video, the Board members discussed and commented on how RTTT would affect Board policies.

A sample of the MOU and the Scope of Work was given to the Board before-hand for them to review. It was stated that there was a place for Central Falls Teachers' Union to sign if they chose to do so.

Action: Motion to approve made by Ms. Rosado and seconded by Ms. Rodrigues.
Approved 4, 0

D. RTTT ongoing discussion – updates

Ms. Christine Gingerella, Ms. Cathy Cavalho and Mr. Mike Lauro presented their work with Expanded Learning time and opportunities for Calcutt Middle School and Central Falls High School. The presentation is included in the minutes.

The presenters spoke about the following: overarching common components; funding sources and consultants; planning team members; mission and focus; and the need for a revision to the Board's expanded learning opportunities policy.

Action: Informational

V. Motion to Recess to Executive Session

At 6:55 PM, Ms. Rosado motioned to recess to executive session pursuant to chapter 42-46-5(a)(1), that this public body convene in executive session to discuss the job performance of

certain employees, character, or physical or mental health of certain employees (Employee appeals). Executive Session pursuant to chapter 42-46-5(a)(2), that this public body convene in executive session to discuss certain matters that are the subject of collective bargaining and litigation (Federal court litigation and unfair labor practices). Executive Session pursuant to chapter 42-46-5(a)(9), that this public body convene in executive session to hear and discuss grievances filed pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement (Grievances).

A roll call vote was taken and was unanimous, 5 to 0.

Ms. Cano-Morales noted for the public that the Trustees would reconvene after executive session into public session.

The Board returned to public session at 7:15 PM and reconvened the meeting.

VI. Continuation of Policy and Planning

E. Draft termination hearing procedures

The District's legal representative Stephen Robinson explained to the Board that under the teacher tenure act teachers are entitled to hearings. The proposed procedures would allow for timely hearings especially because of the large number of hearings that would be requested. Rulings in other cases, which allow for consolidation, were reviewed. The consolidation was acceptable as long as the hearings were similar. Mr. Robinson recommended that the Board adopt the procedures.

There was a brief discussion. Ms. Rosado proposed one grammatical change. Ms. Rosado asked for clarification on whether or not they would need to make an individual decision on each hearing. Mr. Robinson clarified that the hearings would be consolidated and the decision would apply to all, but that decision would be sent out to teachers individually.

Ms. Cano-Morales read a signed statement from the Central Falls Teachers' Union President, Jane Sessums objecting to the adoption of the procedures.

Action: Motion to approve the hearing procedures as amended by Ms. Rosado was made by Ms. Rodrigues and seconded by Ms. Perez. Approved 5, 0

VII. Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included the April 13, 2010 regular meeting minutes and personnel actions.

Ms. Rodrigues and Ms. Rosado had amendments to the April 13, 2010 minutes.

Recently the Rhode Island Department of Education has clarified the rules of "grandfather" rights under elementary education for Grade 6. In following with their guidelines the following lay-off letters may be rescinded.

RESCISSIONS

Calcutt Middle School

Jay Grenier - Calcutt Middle School

Gerry Lapiell'e - Calcutt Middle School

Maryellen Cardenas - Calcutt Middle School

Cathy Carvalho - District ESL Specialist

Administrator

Elizabeth Legault - Principal Calcutt Middle School

Frank Devall, Jr. - Assistant Principal Calcutt Middle School

RESCINDING FOR RETIREMENT

Len Newman - Central Falls High School

APPOINTMENTS:

Central Falls High School - Academy Leaders

Deanna Camputaro

Joshua LaPlante

Jane Bernardino

RETIREMENTS:

Richard Currier - Custodian - Feinstein School

Simone Barzykowski - Teacher Assistant - Central Falls High School

The motion to approve the consent agenda with the amendments to the minutes and the personnel actions was made Ms. Perez and seconded by Ms. Rosado. Approved 5, 0

VIII. Superintendent's Report

A. Grant opportunities

The district is actively pursuing the Nellie Mae grant opportunities for students and as well as a systems grant. Five districts will be competing for the systems grant so it will be competitive.

B. Building capacity

RIDE has funded for the district to work with Mass Insight, a recognized leader in research. The district also signed aboard on their i3 application. The district is actively working to bring as many resources as possible to the schools.

C. Facilities

Head Start will use the lower level in Captain Hunt. The district is looking forward to the expansion because of the concerted effort to embrace and work with pre-school programs. There is not enough space to bring all of the Kindergarteners back to Captain Hunt so the district is leasing the Fairlawn School and will use the upper level of Captain Hunt. Currently the district has 60 Central Falls children the in Head Start programs that are being bused to Pawtucket.

Segue continues to use the building on Cowden Street because of the number of students they have attracted. The district will be housing 6th, 7th and 8th grades fully at Calcutt. Calcutt Too will be fully used by Segue.

Last week the district was asked to make a video for Extreme Makeover. The Academy Leaders and three students spoke about the need at the high school. We have a strong position because we have the facilities studies so that if we were selected clearly the study would inform any of their architects and workers. Ms. Gist prepared an introduction and Walter Hourahan, Frances Gallo and Mary Lou Perez also appeared in the video. The video was submitted.

IX. Public Comment

Joe Travers, a high school teacher, commented about the many meetings he has attended meetings in the last month and is reminded each time that all the teachers are terminated. He stated that he still didn't understand why. He also stated that the terminations made the teachers and students more resilient.

He read a list of things that they had done, which included: athletic accomplishments, College Acceptance letters, raised scores in NECAP, successful portfolios, number of students graduating, blood drives, Grand Canyon trip, Chess Team's accomplishments, Health and Science Fair, continuation of internship program, scope and sequence development, and the National Honor Society.

Mr. Travers stated that throughout the termination period he has heard words like ineffective, incompetent, and phrases like "can't get it done". He stated that he had spoken with Ms. Gallo the prior week and that he had told her that the administration was a good team. He asked why replace a good administration if you have it already and if it is because of the model then the model is flawed. Mr. Travers also asked that if the district goes back to transformation will the administrators stay in place.

Dr. Gallo told Mr. Travers that they don't usually answer during public comment but that she would. She stated the new administration will be changed because the district is too far along in the process. Candidates have already been interviewed.

X. Next Board Meeting

Board of Trustees work session meeting: Tuesday, May 25, 2010.

XI. Motion to Return to Executive Session

Ms. Estrada motioned to return into executive session and it was seconded by Ms. Rodrigues.

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