

Central Falls School District Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
August 10, 2010
6:00 p.m.
Central Falls High School – Library AEC Room

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 6:05 PM.

Present: Ms. Anna Cano-Morales, Chairwoman
Ms. Sonia Rodrigues, Vice Chairwoman
Ms. Mary Lou Perez, Clerk
Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado
Ms. Leslie Estrada
Mr. B.K. Nordan

Not present: Mr. Vladimir Ibarra (excused)

II. Pledge

The pledge was led by Dr. Gallo.

III. Planning

A. Central Falls High School transformation plan

Mr. Capellan, Ms. Jones and Mr. Sam gave the Board an overview of the transformation plan that was due to RIDE on Friday, August 13th as well as how the preparations for the first day of school were coming along.

Mr. Capellan began the presentation with an overview of the operational side of things. After meeting with central office staff and with teachers, the student master schedule was identified as the first item needing review. In the spring students typically sit with their guidance counselor to see what courses they would like to take as well as what courses they need; that was not done. The guidance team was asked to meet with the lead team to work on completing the students' schedules. Schedules will be given to the students for review on scheduled orientation nights.

The teaching schedule was set up with seven nonrotating periods in order to accommodate a daily advisory period that would run opposite the lunch schedule.

There was a brief discussion on what the process for course selection would be for special education students. Students with IEPs would go through the same process but would have their case workers helping them as well. All the 9th and 10th grade students would also be attending academy invitational days in order to become more familiar with the academies and the expectations so they would be better informed when picking their

courses in their junior and senior years. It was suggested that the persons assisting the students with IEPs needed to be called something other than case workers. It was agreed that the lead team would look into what else they could be called.

An update was given on the physical aspects of the building. The building was being cleaned and the spaces within the building were being reworked to better suit the learning environment. Decorations and painting were among some of the things that were going to be done to make the school more welcoming.

An update was given on the professional development and staffing. The professional development for the high school teachers would take place the week of August 23rd. The framework being used for it is the Danielson model. The High School is fully staffed. A couple of positions have been vacated and have been filled.

The three main goals that were identified for the upcoming year were improving math proficiency, decreasing the dropout rate and building the climate and culture.

Ms. Jones reported on a new way that mathematics would be offered to the students. Based on data, students in 9th and 10th grade would take two math courses. An intervention program would be included based on the student's need. An online diagnostic program called Study Island would be used to address skills and tailor the programs for the students. The middle school will also be using the program. In addition, a team was formed in order to identify a math teacher leader in the building and a stakeholder group was also in development.

Assessments were discussed. Every content area has to have three portfolio tasks. More interim tests would be given to help identify students' needs earlier. The data will also be used to help guide teaching strategies that are more specific to math, building up the curriculum with a pacing guide, and to help make sure that everything is aligned. Discussed were math incentive programs, the SMILE group, how teachers would have access to consultants, math assemblies which might include guest speakers, games, math celebrations. The DANA Institute and EBEC are also involved. NECAP identifies trend data and should drive the programming for the school, but the diagnostic will give more information.

The classification criteria for proficiency and what they mean were discussed. Progressive goals can be set and would be monitored more internally than externally, which would assist the data team in identifying specific goals. The goal is to have fewer students in the level 1 category.

There was a brief discussion on how the math data would impact the English Language Learners (ELLS) in order to show their true knowledge of the subject. Diagnostics for the ELL population was already being researched. ELL math teachers would be part of the professional development as well. ELL resource teachers and SIOP coaches will also be valuable resources.

The reading benchmarks are 85% by 2012. Seniors were retested in NECAP and they scored at about 60%. There was improvement and progress. There are four reading

teachers, many programs to help students, and an English teacher leader around literacy strategies will be identified.

All benchmarks have to be approved by RIDE. Although the focus is on math, the strategies are being applied across the curricula.

The graduation and dropout rate were discussed. There is a focus on wrap-around services and multiple pathways programs. The focus is more on the cohorts and credit expectations since all students need 25 credits for graduation. An overview of what those 25 credits entail was given. The multiple pathways program is a credit-based solution. Once a student begins to fall behind this is when other avenues are introduced. This also includes informing parents and families of where the child is at any given time.

Performance management was discussed, specifically administrator and teacher evaluations. Using the Danielson Framework for Teachers, which the Union/District Consortium uses as well, allows everyone to know the expectations. Danielson's work was introduced during the professional development in June and the implementation strategies will be introduced during the professional development in August. The structure is divided into four domains that are very clear, specific and observable. With the help of Mass Insight and Annenberg, the team was able to narrow down their focus by assessing the needs of the building, the goals and what good teaching should be.

There was a brief discussion about how professionalism was being defined, if there were rubrics, how that would be broken down, and how well this framework would be received. The American Federation of Teachers' work and the Rhode Island Department of Education's (RIDE) work were already aligned with the framework.

Templates will be created to develop Professional Learning Plan, an improvement plan for every teacher. The initial observations, the Danielson Framework as well as teacher input will determine the scope of the improvement plan. There will be two formal evaluations; the first would be completed by October 15th; therefore a mix of internal and external evaluators would be needed.

To conclude the conversation, an update on the communications efforts regarding the plan was given. Last week the Leadership Team presented an overview to parents at a parent forum that was held in the high school cafeteria. The stakeholder group will be reconvened on August 17th so that they may continue to stay engaged. Upcoming events are as follows: August 16th at 5:30 p.m. there will be a brief presentation to families, who have decided to leave the high school, on what the high school can offer their children; student orientations will be held on August 18th and 19th, and a Back to School celebration is going to be held on August 21st. These will all be opportunities for the new administration to meet the families. During the orientations, students will receive their schedules and overview of what they can expect in the upcoming school year. The high school administrators were also working with TALL University and other students over the summer.

IV. Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 13th meeting and retreat minutes was made by Ms. Rodrigues and seconded by Ms. Estrada. Unanimously approved 6, 0.

No personnel actions were taken.

V. Public comment

No public comment was given.

VI. Next Board of Trustees

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be on August 24, 2010

VII. Motion to recess to executive session and adjournment

A motion to recess into 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 (preparation for collective bargaining) was made by Ms. Estrada and seconded by Ms. Rosado.

The public meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

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