

Central Falls School District Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
September 28, 2010
6:00 p.m.
Central Falls High School – Library

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. Leslie Estrada

Not present: Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado (excused)
Mr. B.K. Nordan (excused)
Mr. Vladimir Ibarra

II. Pledge

III. Recognition

September 21st was the International Day of Peace. In celebration of that day, the ACT Academy sponsored their annual school wide art instillation. They had two wire grids of peace of peace symbols in the cafeteria during lunches. They had strips and markers for everyone to record a wish for peace and tie on the two wire grids. It created white symbols which were hung in front of the school. Students, teachers, aides, kitchen staff, maintenance, and district office were all invited to participate.

ACT Academy Leader Ms. Deanna Camputaro told the Board that it takes a long time to put the concept of peace into the curriculum but that it is an important thing to incorporate given today's society. They are going to start working with the children at the elementary level so they can become involved as well.

The Board suggested incorporating peace in all aspects of the community. Ms. Camputaro informed the Board that students in Ms. Deloris Grant's classes were working on proposals that involve the community. She added that there would be more peace tile events coming up.

IV. Planning

A. Restraint policy update – first reading

By law the district needs to have this policy. There were some minor changes to the law so therefore some changes needed to be made. In the past, all restraint paperwork was sent to

RIDE the same day of an incident but the District was informed that it is now only data is required annually.

There was some brief discussion on who performs the restraints. The restoration specialists are the people who are trained to perform restraints and they are only done in extreme emergencies. Administrators are also involved in the restraint process and there are the procedures in place for it. There were some more general questions about the policy that were answered.

Data is reported on how many restraints happen in the school buildings is to be reported to RIDE annually as well.

Actions: Second reading would be scheduled for the next meeting and then a vote would be taken.

B. RIIL annual report 2009-10 - discussion

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League sent out their annual report. Athletic Director Kathy Luther was not able to make the meeting but it was important to share the report with the Board given the District's extraordinary sports programs. They proposed to have Ms. Luther speak about the athletic programs at another time.

C. Building Committee - update

The last Building Committee meeting was recessed because there were several items that could not be moved forward until the State Department of Administration gives a presentation on the differences between a commissioning agent, clerk of the works, and construction manager so the committee could make a better informed decision on the matter. The concern is that the receivership and mayor lawsuit may be causing the delay. It is the hope that it will be resolved next week.

The city has been attending the meetings. The District's Finance Director Ms. Venditti has been in communication with the city finance officer Ms. Ellen Eggeman.

D. High School reform plan – update

Mr. Capellan and Mr. Sam updated the Board on the reform. The first update was on Mathematics. All 9th and 10th grade students were scheduled for intervention and are receiving two math and English courses for this quarter. Then the needs will be assessed and those who need it will remain taking two math and ELA courses. The school implemented a Math Warrior Program that helps prepare students for the NECAP test. There have been 20 to 25 students attending the program everyday. The *Study Island*, a diagnostic program, is being used and is available for all students and will also be used at the middle school.

The second update was on the climate and culture at the high school. Advisories were held everyday. An area of concern is the number of students who are late. To help improve this they have called and met with the families of those students who have been late five or more days.

Implementing the behavior management plan has been challenging because students are not used to it yet and some teachers are not fully behind it yet either. Another concern was the number of teacher absences that were occurring.

E. Multiple Pathways - Guide 2 Success

Part of the strategies in improving the graduation rate was to have a multiple pathways program. Forty students applied and currently there are 30 students. Dr. Gallo and Mr. Capellan visited with families to get their feedback. Parents and students have given very positive feedback. Multiple Pathways is a program so the students were asked to come up with their own name for the program. The students decided on naming it Guide 2 Success. Mr. Capellan will be meeting with the Dropout Prevention Coalition in order to add more pathway opportunities.

The Board was encouraged by all of the actions that the school leadership and staff were taking but were concerned that some individuals may still not be on board with the transformation.

There was further discussion on the success of the multiple pathways program, a later start time option at the high school, the teacher absenteeism and the behavior management plan.

Mr. Capellan also reported that the lead team was meeting weekly with RIDE to discuss the progress on the SIG funds request. RIDE's Chief Transformation Officer Jennifer Smith and Mary Caperelli, who were in attendance, informed the Board that the reform plan had been submitted and reviewed and it was substantially approvable. There are some revisions that needed to be made within the next two weeks to get the approval. They could expect to be funded for most of the amount that was asked for. Ms. Smith added that even in the initial transformation plan there are exemplars that could work for the state and nation.

F. Streamlined teachers contract – continued discussion

Dr. Gallo gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding a streamlined teacher contract. CFTU president Ms. Sessums was invited to attend and to inform her membership of the meeting. For the record Ms. Sessums response was read. It stated:

Dear Dr. Gallo:

I am in receipt of your September 17, 2010 letter inviting me to be in the audience to hear your thinking on our upcoming contract negotiations. I was unable to respond earlier because of personal circumstances.

I believe that an open discussion about bargaining goals and negotiations process would be welcome. I do not believe that my sitting in the audience of a Board of Trustees meeting to hear your thoughts is the proper forum for such a discussion. Although I normally attend all Board of Trustees meetings, I will not be in attendance next Tuesday. Instead, I suggest that your committee and our current committee meet in the next few weeks to discuss process and goals.

Please note that the CFTU has elections this fall, and I will not be able to finalize the CFTU negotiations committee membership until all officer elections are completed.

Sincerely,
Jane M. Sessums

Dr. Gallo noted that the administrators were present for the presentation.

Dr. Gallo commented that she had the privilege of attending the NBC Education Nation. During that summit it was clear that Central Falls was on the right track. The contract needs to be readable, flexible and usable.

Before beginning the presentation, Dr. Gallo informed the Board the 5th grade experiment at Robertson was working. Principal David Alba came on board right away. The culture and climate is positive. She further informed the Board that Principal Joseph Rousseau was monitoring two buildings and that the staff is working well together.

Dr. Gallo reiterated that she had asked Ms. Sessums to invite her membership but given that they were not present she told the Board she would make the invitation herself that next time.

Dr. Gallo researched AFT contracts from across the country. Based on the research Dr. Gallo was recommending a compact rather than a contract.

The presentation highlighted three of the 11 belief statements that were created in 2007. The items that were presented were as follows: math goals and reading goals, graduation rates, goals for educational compact, a new paradigm for collective bargaining, a living document structure, principles for bargaining process, suggested timeline for compact creation, third party facilitation, and New Haven Public Schools and Pittsburgh Public Schools examples.

It was also stated that the District had received two new grievances from the High School.

Dr. Gallo thanked the administrators for attending. The Board was in support of Dr. Gallo directly inviting staff to attend the discussions on this topic.

Dr. Gallo explained that the understanding is that if a contract is not reached by May then the settlement that was reached at the High School still continues so that the transformation can continue. It was also stated that 17 teachers had been absent at the High School and that it is problematic.

V. Public Comment

Ms. Camputaro commented that she could only speak for herself but that she thought it would be good to have a third party come to present the information that was given by Dr. Gallo regarding a streamlined contract.

VI. Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the revised minutes of the September 14th meeting and the personnel items was made by Ms. Rodrigues, seconded by Ms. Estrada, and unanimously approved 4, 0.

The personnel items were as follows:

RESIGNATION:

The following people have submitted their letter of resignation:

Alicia Migliori

Mathew Kelly

APPOINTMENTS:

Emily Santelises – high school

Samantha Desmarais – high school

VII. Superintendent's Report

A. 2010 RI Healthy Schools Coalition Award of Honor

Dr. Gallo, Marie Grist, Denise DeBarros and Mary Lou Perez attended the 2010 RI Healthy Schools Coalition event and received the award of honor for the District. The reasons the District received the award are as follows:

- Active, vibrant, engaged, well organized and highly supported (by District Leadership) District Well ness Committee (*includes representation from the Board of Trustees, Superintendent, District Head Nurse, Coordinator for Family, Community & School Partnerships, ARAMARK, URI Nutrition Educators front SNAP-Ed, Kids First, TALL University, School Social Worker, Physical Education teachers, and more.*)
- Measured Obesity District-wide: the district, with help from the URI SNAP-Ed team, measured the BMI's of 2,276 students (indicating just over 50% overweight or obese.) The data was then used as an impetus for the development of age appropriate interventions addressing health and well ness needs of students.
- Implemented Breakfast in the Classroom during 2009-2010 in all three K-5 Elementary Schools. Participation increases are as follows:
 - Margaret I. Robertson School - from 29% to 73%
 - Veterans Memorial School - from 33% to 81 %
 - Ella Risk School - from 30% to 73%
- Implemented Breakfast in the Classroom, Fall 2010, in both PreK-K schools, Captain Harold G. Hunt and Fairlawn Schools.
- Development of Student Centered Individual Nutrition Plans (INP's) is underway. Wellness is being integrated in the 9th grade Individual Learning Plan (ILP). Central Falls is creating an Individual Nutrition Plan (INP) whose format, goals and tools are being based on feedback from student focus groups. Behavioral objectives which every incoming 9th grader will select from to focus his or her wellness efforts include: increasing fruit or vegetable consumption, reducing soda and increasing low calorie/nutritious drinks, eating reasonable portions, reducing screen time and increasing physical activity, and limiting fast food.
- Physical Education (PE) is a focus in Central Falls. PE staff were given common planning time to work on the curriculum, scheduled during the day and after school. PE Teams have been doing K-12 Gap Analysis and Quarterly Mapping of curriculum and have been working on scope and sequencing.
- Implemented the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in all 5 Elementary Schools.

- ARAMARK has implemented Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Bars during lunch service, offering 6 different options, with many RI-Grown options.
- ARAMARK continues to grow the RI Farm to School Program, serving RI grown potatoes, peaches, plums, apples, broccoli, lettuce, strawberries, carrots, and apples in 2009-2010 and adding new items like zucchini and summer squash in 2010-2011.
- Central Falls High School has implemented a Health Academy as one of the Academy choices for Juniors and Seniors, with two Nutrition Science Classes being taught each year.
- Working with Channel One, the High School students (Juniors and Seniors) planned and implemented a Health Fair for the entire school. The students calculated BMI's and performed blood pressure screenings for their peers.
- High School Sports Coaches have arranged for SNAP· Ed Nutrition Educators to meet with their teams and teach the athletes about Sports Nutrition.
- Developed and implemented an interactive elementary level nutrition curriculum to increase breakfast participation through specially designed nutrition games/activities used in conjunction with the bestselling children's book, *The Hatseller and the Monkeys*. All students at Veteran's Memorial were taught the importance of breakfast in order to provide energy, reduce absences and increase grades and test scores.
- Implemented a Summer School Institute, "Read, Talk and Play." Teachers used children's literature to teach health/wellness to over 650 students. URI SNAP-Ed provided 68 book kits and curriculum and an additional 70 library books with the goal of increasing fruit, vegetable and whole grain consumption in children. Chefs from Johnson & Wales University conducted healthy foods cooking demos with students.
- To address nutrition in the home, working with Kids First and URI SNAP-Ed, Parent Newsletters were developed and mailed to all families of children in the district. Topics included healthy eating strategies on a limited food budget.
- CF High School hosted a Biggest Loser Contest, a three month competition with 24 staff participating. There were weekly weigh-ins and 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes for the biggest losers (highest percentage of body weight.)
- A Central Falls Public Schools *Shape Up* Team was organized and competed in the 2010 *Shape Up RI* competition.
- The District Wellness Committee was exemplary in how it handled the HIN1 virus outbreak, recognized for having the state's highest percentage of its students vaccinated.

B. Education Nation Summit comments

Dr. Gallo spoke about her experience during the streamlined contract conversation. She mentioned that the Board of Regents had endorsed the Local 94 contract, and that the new contract is producing cost savings within the District.

C. New exploration with Rhode Island College

Dr. Ozcan, Dr. Page, and Dean Sidorkin of Rhode Island College heard about how the District wanted to implement teacher leaders and are offering a program to teachers who want to be leaders and may also want to be administrators. The program would be for about 15 people. Three professional development days could serve as the catalyst.

The District has also wanted to offer a small group of librarian, music, and art teachers the opportunity to take online courses. Permission from the Union to offer the online courses has been sought by the District but no response has been given as yet.

VIII. Next Board of Trustees

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be on Tuesday, October 12, 2010.

IX. Motion to Recess to Executive Session and Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the public meeting was made by Ms. Rodrigues and seconded by Ms. Estrada. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

No executive session was held.