

Central Falls School District Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes
October 26, 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 6:04 PM.

Present: Ms. Anna Cano-Morales, Chairwoman
Ms. Sonia Rodrigues, Vice Chairwoman
Mr. B.K. Nordan
Mr. Vladimir Ibarra

Not Present: Ms. Leslie Estrada (excused)
Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado (excused)
Ms. Mary Lou Perez, Clerk

II. Pledge

III. Policy & Planning

A. Building Committee – update

The Building Committee has been meeting weekly at the Central Falls High School in the library. During the October 18th meeting items that were approved by the building committee to go before the Board for approval were as follows: bill payments as submitted by JAED, the opening of the ESCO bid and the Design-Bid-Build approach. Each item was explained and a brief summary of the current facility bills was given.

Actions: A motion to approve the bills as submitted by JAED, the ESCO bid for review and to approve the design-bid-build approach was made by Ms. Rodrigues and Mr. Nordan.

B. High School Reform – update plan

Mr. Victor Capellan updated the Board on the High School reform. He reported that several parent volunteers have been in the school. The G2S students were working with students at Robertson and that the reports on the program have been positive.

There is currently only one vacancy, which is for a reading specialist. In order to keep some consistency, the lead team has been able to hire long-term substitutes. It was noted that the daily teacher absences have remained the same and/or decreased in the last couple of weeks. The situation continues to be monitored.

The teacher performance management observations have been on-going with the lead team and with support from the administration as well as a bench of professionals. To date 41 observations had been completed and 16 more would be completed in the next few weeks.

The remaining observations will be completed before Thanksgiving. The data is being compiled in order to figure out the allocation of resources.

Ms. Evelyn Jones informed the Board of how data was being used. The student attendance and punctuality data has reflected a 15 to 20% student absenteeism and tardiness. Some of the interventions that have been used are the automatic calling system, letters to parents, assemblies, conferences and referrals to services. Through the collaboration with Toyota, they are being to delve deeper into the data to understand the issue so that interventions can be applied appropriately. The data will be displayed so that teachers and students can understand it as well.

Dr. Gallo explained that the new state education funding formula will be based on an average daily membership. When 15% of students are not in school that will affect how much funding the district will receive. There is loss of education for the student and loss of funds for the district. The projection of charter school attendance is another factor affecting funding. Teachers and administrators are not hired based on attendance so it will be a problem that could cause \$1.8M loss to the district.

Mr. Sonn Sam updated the Board on discipline. There are certain discipline issues that are not uncommon to a high school setting but need to be addressed. The data on discipline referrals was given. Bullying is a national problem and the issue is being addressed rapidly. There have been 23 suspensions this year. There have been six arrests at the school in which five were not school-related.

There was a question regarding the start time for the high school students. Ms. Jones had a Young Voices meeting and the school start time was a topic that came up and was discussed with the students. It has also come up in peer mediation and at student counsel. It continues to be on the table for further discussion.

In order to get more students involved, the Toyota data that the lead team would like to display for teachers and students, could potentially be part of a project for math classes so that students can get a good and solid learning experience.

The CFTU had a query on the \$3,000 teacher stipend. The stipend does not constitute compensation pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 36-8-1 and therefore no pension contributions are due on said sums. Statute excludes this compensation because it is extra pay for regular work. The matter now rests with the Pension Board.

The Settlement Agreement language states that there will be an annual stipend to be paid across the pay periods. No other additional compensation will be due to teachers as a result of this agreement except as specifically set forth herein.

C. Streamlined teachers contract – continued discussion

The district would like to move away from a legal contract and move to an educational compact. Dr. Gallo went through a PowerPoint presentation. 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. There will be a series of discussions at a variety of places in order to solicit information from the public.

There is a call to action that was made by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, Randi Weingarten, the president of the American Federation of Teachers, and Dennis Van Roekel, the president of the National Education Association, regarding plans to convene a national education reform conference on labor-management collaboration early next year to highlight examples of progressive collective bargaining agreements across the country and promote opportunities for management and labor to forge reforms at the state and district level.

IV. Public Comment

Yamara Ayala, a parent of a high school student, informed the Board that she is a parent volunteer at the high school because she felt that education is a partnership. The parent commented on the protocols that are being used for the volunteers as well as the use of identification badges that will help faculty and staff in the building know who they are. She and other parents are volunteering in the classrooms and helping as much as they can.

Terese McMauhg, a parent of middle and high school students, commented that she felt that the High School is coming around but does not feel that is coming along fast enough but does feel very welcomed as a volunteer. She went to Calcutt on Friday and did not feel welcomed.

Maria Christina Bentacur, a parent of a high school student, informed the Board that she works with the Square Mile Coalition and is a high school parent volunteer. Her comment was regarding an interaction she had with a staff member at Calcutt Middle School while trying to get her volunteer badge. She felt that the secretary was not welcoming. She also commented that there were many high school teachers that have been very welcoming and she has had good experiences in the classrooms.

Dagoberto Nunez, a parent of middle and high school students, commented that he observed two females in an altercation at Calcutt after school and did not notice a police or adult presence.

Nancy Vazquez, a parent of elementary, middle and high school students, commented that one of her children had been experiencing bullying. She informed the Board that she had spoken with the High School leadership team about the situation.

Ms. Cano-Morales noted that the incidents that the parents were referring to had happened before that day and that she and Dr. Gallo as well as others knew about them and had already taken steps to rectify the situations.

V. Consent Agenda

Motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting with some amendments was made by Mr. Nordan, seconded by Ms. Rodrigues, and unanimously approved 4, 0.

VI. Superintendent's Report

A. New England Secondary School Consortium

Dr. Gallo was invited to represent the state at the New England Secondary School Consortium. A booklet, which contained international benchmarks for high school learning, was given to the participants, and Dr. Gallo shared it with the lead team. Dr. Gallo requested that the Board to review the commitment sheet so they could begin to have a preliminary discussion regarding the protocols of becoming a member.

B. Nellie Mae Foundation

The Nellie Mae Foundation conducted a site visit to the Central Falls High School. There were five people in attendance from the Foundation. They toured the school, met with the leadership team, administration, students, teachers, community partners and parents. There will be another meeting in which logic mapping will be done with stakeholders.

C. College Crusades

The College Crusades has a continued partnership and are working in the middle school. They continue to recruit students for their program.

VII. Board Comments

None.

VIII. Next Board of Trustees

The next Board of Trustees meeting will be on Tuesday, November 9, 2010.

IX. Motion to Recess to Executive Session and Adjournment

A motion to recess to 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 (certified collective bargaining) was made by Ms. Rodrigues and seconded by Mr. Ibarra. A roll call vote was taken and was unanimous, 4 to 0.

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