

Pawtucket School Committee Work Session

Saturday, February 4, 2012

**8:00 AM – 12:00 PM School Administration Building 2nd Floor
Conference Room**

286 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860

I. Meeting will come to order

The Chairman called the work session to order at 8:10 AM

a. Roll call

Mr. Araujo-here; Ms. Bonollo-here; Mr. Coughlin-absent; Mr. Noonan-here; Ms. Nordquist-absent; Mr. Spooner-here; Mr. Tenreiro-here

Also in attendance were Mrs. Deborah Cylke, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Skip Jenkins, Center for Reform School Systems.

b. Pledge of Allegiance

The Chairman led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Participation

None

III. Discussion Items

Note: This is a work session. Votes on any work will be taken at a future regular or special meeting.

Mr. Tenreiro: We have at least one other session.

Mrs. Cylke: We contracted for four.

3. Vision

Mr. Jenkins: Please refer to page 27, analyzing data and avoiding traps from misinterpreting data. There is a book on gauging the gaps by Kate Haycock.

Mr. Tenreiro: Every six months we should read a book to update us.

Mr. Jenkins: We have a reading list about core values and commitments and how you value them.

Mrs. Cylke: My evaluation is coming up and I would hope we can take that and move forward and I have been collecting data from other communities.

Mr. Jenkins: The Superintendent evaluation is a huge issue and the National School Board Association must have data, but it must be you having data, forming a review. We can provide you with a format, evaluation form, document it with personal and professional goals and we as a committee set his goals for him.

Consequences of not closing achievement gaps:

Rich and Poor

Skilled and Unskilled

In 50 years, 50% of 18 year olds will not graduate.

Do you believe that all children can achieve?

Mr. Tenreiro: I think the question is does every child have the ability to improve? An example of that would be the severe/profound students at Curtis Elementary School. Their IEP might say their goal is to get them to get a fork to their mouth or to dress themselves.

Mr. Spooner: I know a severe/profound teacher who was able to get a student to work with an iPad who is unable to speak. She believes she helps each and every student in her class.

Mr. Jenkins: How do you engage kids to learn?

We believe if you define achievement as attainable, you can set standards for children to achieve. We found resources for best

practices in our own district that we didn't know we had.

Mr. Tenreiro: RIDE is trying to create data information systems and link it to UCOA. Sure we have pockets of growing kids—ELL. If that's an ineffective way that we're providing service, I think we're open to change. In my district, it's status quo. We're an elite status.

Mr. Spooner: Our taxes are some of the highest. The elderly are not happy or interested in education.

Ms. Bonollo: Let's make a cohesive effort to get to the senior citizens to be more informed as to what is going on in the education system.

Mr. Jenkins: Can we educate all children at high levels and eliminate achievement gaps? Yes, because it's being done.

Mrs. Cylke: The Tolman and Shea teachers are hungry after the transformation meeting. That's my sense and it's very positive.

Mr. Tenreiro: Have focused relentless leaders with the courage to take on tough challenges. On that the chair, whoever it may be, there is research on all day kindergarten that shows in grades kindergarten through grade three that it's vital that there will be challenges in the community whether they want that or not.

Mrs. Cylke: This board has been very committed to working with the Mayor from keeping it (City) to going into receivership.

Mr. Jenkins asked the members to split into two groups. These two groups were to discuss and compare two different school districts core beliefs and commitments.

One district is the Aldine Independent School District. It is located outside of Houston and has a lot of poor kids, however won international awards and took control with the Superintendent and

transformed their district but the kids were not going to college and the SAT scores were not good.

The next district is the School District of Philadelphia, School Reform Commission, Declaration of Education.

Another district is the Gwinnett County Board of Education.

The last district is Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Board of Education.

Mr. Jenkins asked the members and the Superintendent what they liked most about each of these districts core beliefs and commitments.

Mrs. Cylke: We believe schools have an enormous impact on children's lives. To improve educational outcomes for all students, a qualified teacher must be in every classroom, and every school must have a qualified principal who is an instructional leader. Improving the educational outcomes for our students will require support from all of segments of our community including parents, caregivers, businesses, elected and appointed officials, civic and faith-based organizations, along with the District's leaders, staff, and students.

Ms. Bonollo: Regardless of family support, it is our responsibility to educate them.

Mr. Tenreiro: I like the word sustainability.

Mrs. Cylke: You have to set a strategic plan. I like to call them stretch plans.

Mr. Jenkins: You have to appropriately set goals to achieve sustainability.

Mr. Spooner: Realistically, we are looking at 4% per year.

Mr. Jenkins: Set yourself up for success.

Mr. Tenreiro: Attainable, rigorous goals. It's reachable. Let's try to reach a national goal.

Mr. Noonan: Do you think Aldine's failure was because of NCLB?

Mr. Jenkins: No it was because the Board and the Superintendent were so upset with being listed as one of the lowest performing in the state. They realized state standards don't really help our kids.

Mrs. Cylke: No one wants a system where the kids are just doing well on tests. We want a curriculum with success skills with thinking skills and problem solvers.

Mr. Tenreiro: Robust teachers and learning commitment to essential thinking and success skills.

Critical Thinking:

Mr. Jenkins: Ability to ask the appropriate question. Ask the right question at the right time. The ability to solve.

Gwinnett County:

Mr. Tenreiro: It is short and concise.

Mr. Spooner: They're all cliché.

Ms. Bonollo: They're simple, but there's no challenge.

Mrs. Cylke: It's simple, but elegant.

Ms. Bonollo: There's no passion.

Mr. Noonan: Gwinnett and Aldine do not have anything in there about the achievement gap being eliminated.

Mr. Tenreiro: In #2 they do.

Charlotte:

Mr. Araujo: They are focused on having policy in place; in having

accountability in leadership from management down and fiscal responsibility.

Mrs. Cylke: I like that they want to work the capacity of personnel.

Ms. Bonollo: They are embracing community and diversity.

Mrs. Cylke: This has to be written with high expectations, enthusiasm. It's believable and sincere.

Mr. Spooner: There's a commitment with the student when they graduate.

Sample Core Beliefs:

- **All children can achieve at grade level**
- **All children can reach learning potential**
- **Achievement gap eliminated**
- **School systems can be high performing**

The committee put together a draft of their core beliefs.

Commitments:

The Committee started to draft a list of their commitments.

This will be continued at the next session.

Mr. Noonan left at 11:15 AM.

4. Board Meetings and Committees

Regular Business Meetings:

- **Frequency**
- **Schedule/Duration**
- **Dress/Speech**
- **Tempo/Tone**
- **Space Configuration**
- **Public Participation**

- **Television**

New Seating presentation was presented and the clerk was asked to instruct the maintenance staff for the next meeting to set it up accordingly.

Ms. Bonollo left at 11:20 AM.

Public Participation: Two separate sessions. One at the beginning of the meeting and one at the end, each session timed.

Special report of School Committee members made very specific careful not to violate the OMA.

The board always has the right to know about what they want. The Superintendent has the right to accept the responsibility for cost if the board requests it.

Mr. Spooner: Every year I've been a member I request the same thing, a list of employees with names. I'm still waiting for it. This last time I requested it, I hadn't been voted back in yet.

Mr. Jenkins: Core Beliefs and Commitments—finalize commitments with language. What's our role as committee members and public relations plan.

Mrs. Cylke: I want to be able to clearly communicate to our employees and parents.

Mr. Jenkins: Policy work. There is an assessment tool in you booklet. Please complete it and return it ASAP.

Mrs. Cylke: I see the committee is a governance team that has core beliefs and makes policy and this is what we want done.

IV. Adjournment

Mr. Araujo moved to adjourn. Mr. Spooner seconded.

Voice vote carried all in favor.

The Chairman adjourned the Pawtucket School Committee Work Session of February 4, 2010 at 12:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Clerk

APPROVED March 13, 2012