

Met Board of Trustees Meeting
February 6, 2014
E-Center Conference Room
The Metropolitan Regional Career & Technical Center

Present: Keith Oliveira, Herb Cummings, Nancy Diaz Bain, Dennis Littky, Lela Morgan, Matthew Plain, Charles Walton (phone), Stan Goldstein (phone), Teny Gross, Rob Gallo, Michelle Curreri, Omar Ajaj

The meeting was called to order at 8:11 AM. Matthew Plain, Met Attorney, stated that all parties to be discussed at this personnel related meeting were notified that they can attend if they choose to do so. Two parties declined and one requested a postponement. At 8:15 Keith called the roll to invoke executive session. Executive session began at 8:18 AM.

[the following portion to be sealed after approval]

Matt Plain, explaining today's goal made the following points:

- *We are here to determine if there are staff that the Met doesn't want back next fall*
- *The Met administration brings us, the board, recommendations regarding terminations and dismissals.*
- *Under RI law teachers are afforded rights.*
- *Under RI Teacher Tenure Act, teachers serve under an annual contract:*
 - *Non tenured=teachers that have served less than 3 annual contracts*
 - *Tenured=teachers who have served at least 3 annual contracts.*
- *After March 1st the teachers discussed today will achieve tenured status.*
- *A Non-tenured staff member has a lower burden of proof to show why they should go and that the Met can find a better fit.*
- *Non-Tenured staff can attain emergency certification.*
- *3 people are being discussed today to either dismiss or not.*
- *The board will need to vote on terminations in open session.*
- *The staff have the right to have their personnel info discussed privately, but the vote has to be open—so the general public can know if they are being dismissed.*

Here's how it goes:

- *Staff is advised, evaluated and decisions are made as to who can be renewed for the next year.*
- *The building level administration makes recommendations that are sent to Met administration. Met Administration brings the recommendations to the board for a vote. This has to happen early—i.e. in February-- and staff notified by March 1st even though the staff will work the remainder of the year.*

Prior to making the recommendations under the open meetings act, we are required to notify the teachers that they will be discussed in executive session allowing them the right to address the board prior to the discussion. They can bring counsel and respond to the charges against them. Today we are discussing recommendations pertaining to:

- *1 math specialist (teacher)*
- *1 advisor (teacher)*
- *1 social worker (teacher under the teacher tenure act)*

Two of these recommendations will be voted on in open session. One of the teachers responded to the notification saying she would like to be present with counsel, but later informed us that she couldn't come and that her counsel wasn't available either. We should afford them another opportunity to respond to the concerns prior to the board discussion to terminate them, although we are not required to. We will schedule another meeting to discuss that advisor. The other two we vote on today. They will get letters informing them of the board decision and date of conclusion.

- *You will hear recommendations on the other two staff today.*
- *When we go back into open session, Keith will entertain motions to accept or reject administration's recommendations.*
- *I will send letters out reporting the results of today's and statement of cause.*
- *Within 15 days the staff can appeal.*
- *The Met's personnel files are good—they are done well thorough evaluations, both mid year and end of year. They consist of long narratives and recommendations and compare end of the year results to the suggestions made at mid-year. That's really good—It makes for a nice clean record down the road.*

In regards to the personnel being discussed today:

- *Kelli Conward Johnson—advisor since 2009*
 - *Kelli has asked to come back and address the board with her counsel present at a later date. There will be no vote on her today.*
- *Katherine Dieber, math specialist, certified, and in her first year of service at the Met. She is counted as a first year teacher --not a high burden of proof for us.*
 - *Nancy explained that within the first month it became clear that Katherine's social and organizational skills did not point to success. In this position, relationships are paramount, so she needs to be let go. We must find a better fit. She's our floater person between all buildings.*
 - *Keith will call for a vote in open session*
- *Erica Anglon—a social worker at the Met since 2003. Erica started in an advisor role. She had an emergency certification in Spanish.*
 - *On or about June 2008 the school let Erica know that her certification area could not support her continued employment as an advisor. She didn't satisfy the necessary requirements to continue as an advisor.*
 - *She moved into the school social worker role for the 2008-09 school year.*

- *There has been a history of school performance issues, multiple times per week around tardiness, performance, and missed meetings with other staff and parents in addition to failing to meet with some of the students under her authority.*
- *In all of her evaluations her supervisors informed her she needed to improve and was given work plans. In many instance, she failed to make improvements under those plans. These have been written notifications.*
- *The tardiness and reliability--extremely important in a school setting--is the concern. Coupled with that are certification issues.*
- *Now in a social work role, Erica needs RI school certification. She's a social worker by training and trade but has not gone through the steps to attain her RI certification.*
- *She was informed she needed to take the certification test, but hasn't completed it yet and currently doesn't have the necessary certifications. The burden is on the teacher to keep up their certifications, and if they don't, they generally they are not afforded the same rights as certified teachers. Technically someone without the certifications could be told 'sorry you can't fulfill this role anymore'. We are just being extra careful in our process.*
- *Two reasons for dismissal: performance and certification*

Keith entertained a motion to come out of exec session. A roll call vote to come out took place 8:51 AM and to seal the minutes of the executive session.

Keith:

- On the matter of Katherine Dieber, QR Specialist, the motion to accept the administration's recommendation of not-to-renew carries.
- On the matter of Erica Anglon, social worker, the motion not-to-renew carries.

Keith stated that the board will give notice to both of these parties to non-renew. For the third person, Kelli Conward Johnson, the board will accommodate her request to schedule an additional meeting.

Matthew stated that an agreeable date will be decided for Kelli and her counsel to meet with the board, with enough advance notice to post it on the Open Meetings website and make sure the board is available. We will need a quorum. Administration will get back to all on a potential date.

Nancy added that in addition to the teacher/advisor competencies document used to advise competency for Met staff in the board's folders, the met evaluation process document was passed out.

Joe was introduced to talk about NECAP and referred to an informational handout prepared for the board. He stated that what the Providence Journal published and what the reality is, is somewhat different.

To pass the NECAP, a student needs a score of a 2, 3, or 4. RIDE puts out how many students get a 3 or a 4. A score of 2 = Partially Proficient, 3= Proficient, 4= Exceeds. To pass you need at 2 or better. A report of scores of 3 and 4 only doesn't align to anything-- its just a cut off they put out there. Number 2 is what a student needs in order to graduate. However in the paper you see 3s and 4s reported and tied to schools. We look at 2 *and* 3 and 4 because that is the graduation requirement. In this way, our achievement in reading and math is 50% higher than the others similar to us and only 10% below the state wide average. There is a big differential between adding 2s and that's real because kids can graduate because of getting a 2. The 3-and-4-only score isn't tied to anything that the Journal and RIDE publishes.

Dennis added that when you look at test score data you can divide up exactly by socioeconomic status, the student population achievement levels.

Joe stated that the Met tests students when they first arrive at the Met. Over 30% of high school students come it at grade 4 or 5 levels and their skills are brought way up by 11th grade. When you talk about growth it's a pretty amazing achievement.

Joe concluded by explaining that students who score a 1 on their final attempt at NECAP will have to retest in the fall. If they don't show adequate growth they will have to take an alternate approved test and/or participate in the waiver process in order to graduate.

Nancy thanked the board and in a show of appreciation shared some chocolate bars courtesy of Met Recruitments. She explained that applications for new students are due on the 13th and encouraged anyone who knows someone who would be a good fit for the Met to apply.

Meeting adjourned at 9:11 AM.