



PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

June 4, 2015

7:00 p.m.

Pine Hills Elementary School

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: ALSO PRESENT:

Ginnie Farrell, President
Sue Adler, Vice President
C. Anthony Owens, Secretary
Dr. Rose Brandon
Anne Savage
Kenneth Bruce

Dr. Marguerite Vanden Wyngaard, Superintendent
Bill Hogan, Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs
Kathleen Culligan, Human Resources Administrator
Jeff Honeywell

ABSENT:

No absences

Call to Order:

- Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Members of the audience were welcomed and thanked for taking the time to attend the meeting.
- The Mission Statement was read.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Grade Configuration update

Dr. V began the evening speaking about grade configuration. We began the important process of evaluating our elementary and middle-school enrollment last week with the first meeting of our Grade Configuration Steering Committee. I am grateful to the 40 community, staff and board members who have volunteered their time to help us with this work.

The committee will spend the next several months studying all aspects of enrollment in our district from prekindergarten through eighth grade. The work begins with the premise that we need additional middle-school facilities to serve our growing student population beginning in 2016-17.

From that starting point the committee will examine numerous issues related to facilities, building capacity, programs, equity, grade configuration and enrollment zones. We expect to have recommendations for the board in December.

Our next step in this process will be our Grade Configuration Summit on June 23 at Giffen Memorial Elementary School. The summit will bring together about 100 people from throughout our district and community to provide input as we get started. All of the Steering Committee's meetings will be open to the public to observe and listen. We also will hold an open town-hall meeting in September, and a second 100-person summit in October. You can follow the entire process in the Grade Configuration section of our district website.

Refugee Art Show/Black and Latino Achievers

I had the pleasure of attending two wonderful community events that highlighted our students Tuesday evening.

Mayor Sheehan and the Capital Region Refugee Roundtable hosted an opening reception at City Hall for a new Refugee Art Exhibition. It was so inspiring to celebrate our talented young artists together with their families and city leaders.

Our students' outstanding work will be on display at City Hall throughout the month of June. I invite you to stop by when you have an opportunity.

Also Tuesday evening, I attended the YMCA's annual Black and Latino Achievers reception. The event honored adults and students from Albany and throughout the Capital Region who have made significant contributions and achievements in their communities.

Three Albany High School students were among the Student Achievers recognized:

- Daveisha Richards-Carryl – who we will meet in just a few minutes on another subject!
- Trayvon Smallwood, and
- Mah'lee Woods

District VIP visitors

We have been working with some high-profile guests on visits to our school district recently.

As you know, we welcomed new State Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia for her first school visit in her new job last week. Commissioner Elia came right here to Pine Hills Elementary School to begin her tenure. I want to recognize Principal Vibetta Sanders, her staff and students for rolling out the red carpet to welcome our new commissioner.

On Monday, U.S. Senator Kristen Gillibrand is planning a visit to Albany School of Humanities in her efforts to support reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act. The legislation expires in September, and Senator Gillibrand is pushing hard to have it reinstated without any cutbacks that would hurt our students and families.

The Child Nutrition Act is critical for us in our efforts to meet the needs of our community. It supports free breakfast and lunch for all of our students in all of our schools. It also supports the popular summer meals program we will be operating again in July and August.

We are honored that Senator Gillibrand has selected Albany as a location to deliver this important message.

And we are working with the office of Assembly member Pat Fahy to schedule a June 16 visit to Hackett Middle School for our new Board of Regents representative, Josephine Finn.

We are looking forward to welcoming Regent Finn for this opportunity to talk with her about the hard work our staff are doing at Hackett, and the focused strategies Principal Michael Paolino has in place and is designing in our efforts to improve the school's performance.

Receivership

Although we continue to await further guidance from the state about receivership, I want to update you on our progress since our last board meeting.

We assembled a Community Engagement Team to meet for the first time at Hackett last week. We reviewed the new law and began evaluating what is working and what needs to be improved for our students to achieve greater success. We also met with the State Education Department last week to learn more about the receivership process.

This week we assembled our internal leadership team, including representatives from our teachers' union, NYSUT and the three schools that we believe could be on the state's receivership list in one form or another when that list is finalized. Those schools, as you know, are Hackett, Albany High and Schuyler Achievement Academy.

At this stage, our work with all parties includes trying to resolve contradictions that currently exist between dates for the plans.

Currently, receivership plans are due June 30. However, SCEP plans required for our School Improvement Grants are due June 10.

We initially were informed that our SCEP plans would suffice for the school-improvement plans under receivership. However, those plans do not require significant transformation strategies that we believe are important pieces of our work going forward at these schools.

Strategies such as extended learning time, common planning time and embedded professional development. We believe these are vital.

We are trying to get the deadline for our SCEP plans pushed back at least to June 20 so that we have time to build those best practices into the SCEPs.

I will keep you updated as this process continues to evolve.

Tonight's guests

Finally, we are excited to welcome two groups of students for recognition tonight.

First, I would like to ask Pine Hills Principal Vibetta Sanders and Arbor Hill Elementary School Principal Rosalind Gaines-Harrell to come forward. They have some serious math whizzes to introduce us to.

Rosalind stated Jah-mel Cody is a straight A student and has been on the Honor Roll for 3 quarters and is anticipated to be on for a fourth. Jamel has 12,251 points. Jah-mel thinks that reading, science, and social studies are important but he says that Math is the most important subject to him. He tries to work his hardest in school, his team and the whole district. He tries his best even if he wants to give up.

Rosalind stated Andre Nicholson is another impressive student who is always on the Honor Roll. Andre has 11,574 points. Andre stated competition always keeps him going in math. He likes that you can learn something every time you log into your account. Playing a few games before he does his work at home helps keep him focused.

Rosalind stated Adam Sefadine is an English Language Learner student who is originally from Sudan. He is one of the top students in the school. Adam stated he and his brother are always competing and trying their hardest to get ahead of each other and they never give up.

Rosalind stated Salim Sefadine is Adams brother and is also another top student in the school. Salim stated he has competitions with his brother so that they can challenge themselves.

Dr. V stated Ms. Yvonne Abunaw would also be joining us this evening. Ms. Abunaw is a retired Albany High teacher who currently serves as president of the Black Women's Association of Albany. Ms. Abunaw is going to introduce us to two Albany High students who have received \$1,000 Marian I. Hughes Memorial Scholarships.

Ms. Abunaw stated the Black women's Association of Albany started back in 2005. The Association gives scholarship awards to deserving female students who are of a minority group and their purpose is to encourage these young achievers and give them a financial and moral boost. They originally started out with two \$1000 awards and two \$500 awards. This year the association has eight \$1000 awards. Ms. Abunaw stated Marian I. Hughes was a pioneering educator in this district. She did a lot of things as a teacher and as an administrator. She also was an author and wrote about the history of the Albany School system going way back into the 1800's. After her passing the association thought that she would be a fitting role model to name the scholarship after. This year they will be having a dinner dance on Saturday, June 20 at the Desmond. Applications are given to different schools within the region. Two receivers of these scholarships are from Albany High School. In order to apply, students need an 80% average, write a brief essay, provide letters of recommendation and a resume. Then they will come in for an interview. She would like to see more participation and more students from Albany High School apply. Ms. Abunaw asked the Board to please help encourage the Albany High School students to apply. She also spoke to the Board about putting an ad in their scholarship journal. They would like to share the news with the public about these outstanding students and get the word out to apply.

Daveisha Richards-Carryl is a senior at Albany High School. She has an 87.5 GPA and her rank is 85 out of the graduating class. She is taking a rigorous academic curriculum which includes several advanced placement level courses. Her passion is acting. She has assisted in helping younger children how to present themselves on stage to the public. She has won other scholarships. Ms. Richards will be going to Long Island University and hopes to have a successful acting career.

When Naw Edcue came in for her interview she told us a story that brought tears to our eyes. She grew up in a refugee camp with no electricity. Her mom died during child birth and her family lost everything. She had very few books and poorly trained teachers. She came to America at 14 years old and she didn't know how to speak English. She now holds an 88.2 GPA and she is 82 in her graduating class. She is going to be going to Siena College.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Fiona Leary spoke about the school music program and the Playwrights Festival which is a selection of plays and a musical that the students write themselves. One student in particular starred in one play that night and wrote a play that night then starred in a musical and also wrote a musical that night.

Ms. Leary thanked the Board and the community for having her as the Student Representative for the past two years. This is her last Board meeting as she will be graduating. She has had an excellent time for the past two years here. Ms. Leary stated in her four years at Albany High School she has received a fantastic academic education and also an amazing life education as well.

Ms. Farrell thanked Fiona Leary and also thanked Cori Dobbs for being amazing Student Representatives for the Board of Education.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Marie Karandy addressed the Board regarding the use of personal electronic devices in the classroom. Ms. Karandy expressed her concern and believes there should be a policy in place for personnel to not use their phones while on the job. Ms. Karandy stated that it is disrespectful and it disrupts the efficiency and quality of the students.
2. Jan Parmalee addressed the Board regarding Albany's will power to help the students read, learn math and master learning. She stated Albany is on the verge of having one to three of our schools taken into receivership. Ms. Parmalee would like the NWEA and other data with goals and trends on every agenda. The district should track, ask hard questions and devote resources to follow through.
3. Ruth Sadinsky addressed the Board concerned about the lack of measurable academic improvement with Albany's most vulnerable children. Ms. Sadinsky stated that graduation rates have only improved slightly and the summer school program needs improvement. Ms. Sadinsky asked to see the reports on the

- classroom studios and noted the impact of the Superintendents role and how it impacts the children's lives.
4. Katherine Malle Sipos addressed the Board congratulating the young boys and girls who spoke earlier. Ms. Sipos expressed her disappointment with the NWEA information regarding no change in academic achievement in three years. Ms. Sipos expressed her concern about the Brighter Choice School and also Receivership. Ms. Sipos mentioned her concerned about staff changes with Receivership.
 5. Audrey Lymon Gary addressed the Board regarding the protocol for a child suspension that takes place on a bus.
 6. Bernard Bryan addressed the Board regarding the amount of time left before Receivership takes place. Mr. Bryan stated the Board and Superintendent should work together as a team during the districts difficult time.
 7. Ann Pope congratulated the Students for their wonderful work. Ms. Pope expressed her concerned for the district schools being in crises. Ms. Pope stated the district needs to turn things around and make changes.
 8. Fredda Peritz addressed the Board regarding Receivership and how this is the time that everyone should support the Superintendent and her work.
 9. Alex Streznewski addressed the Board regarding the support of the leadership of the district. Ms. Streznewski stated the receivership has been a work in process and should not fall back on the current Superintendent.
 10. Robert Reilly addressed the Board regarding his support for the Superintendent. Mr. Reilly stated the leadership needs more time.
 11. April Bacon addressed the Board regarding Receivership and the schools failing. Ms. Bacon stated these problems are fixable and believes the district should focus more on the kids.
 12. Annamarie Lippitt addressed the Board regarding administrative positions that will need to be filled in the near future and making sure the Board addresses that in a timely manner. Ms. Lippitt questioned why the JROTC Program costs the tax payers so much money.
 13. Samuel Carrera addressed the Board regarding the districts commitment to educate the children and to make sure they are successful in the future. Mr. Carrera stated the children deserve higher graduation rates and lower dropout rates.
 14. Carolyn McLaughlen addressed the Board commending the children who were recognized. Ms. McLaughlen is concerned of the Receivership for Hackett and what will happen to the leadership of the district. Ms. McLaughlen expressed changing leadership at this time is not a good things for the district.
 15. Sam Shepard addressed the Board regarding her child attending a failing school. Ms. Shepard is concerned about the Studio classroom and not seeing any data for the past 2 years. Ms. Shepard would like to see more data regarding the Receivership of the district schools.
 16. Edith Leet addressed the Board regarding the Focus Churches annual collection for school supplies and helping the children in the school district. Ms. Leet stated the district should be in support of a lot of these types of programs to help the children with supplies.

17. Mark Bobb Semple addressed the Board commending all of the youth in the district. Mr. Bobb Semple stated the district and the community need to work together and support the Leadership.
18. Noelene Smith addressed the Board regarding conduct steps and levels for disciplining students. Ms. Smith stated the districts need to have clear policies and clear goals in order to have a successful school.
19. Ellen Roach addressed the Board regarding the Wellness Policy. Ms. Roach stated it is a great policy for children and she encourages the board to support the policy. Ms. Roach expressed her concern for the NWEA and students who have been in the school district for the past three years.

INFORMATION

Status of CSDA Curriculum

Karen Bechdol provided a comprehensive presentation for the CSDA curriculum. The presentation provided the definition of curriculum, Curriculum Review Rubric, Rubric Categories, Rubric Example, Status Chart and Next Steps.

Mr. Bruce questioned who the Curriculum Coordinating Council is. Ms. Bechdol advised the council is made up of administrators, teachers & Ms. Savage.

Dr. Brandon questioned who is in charge of making up the curriculum. Ms. Bechdol advised there are a set group of teachers that help with the curriculum. Dr. Brandon also questioned what the time line would be to have the Not Developed curriculums complete. Ms. Bechdol advised their plan is to have them complete by September. Dr. Brandon questioned if the Curriculum team needed outside help. Ms. Bechdol advised the team was fully trained and equipped with the resources needed to complete the task.

Mr. Owen questioned if there was a curriculum in place before the common core. Ms. Bechdol advised that there was a curriculum in place before common core however it had to be completely changed to accommodate the new core.

Ms. Adler questioned about purchasing a curriculum like other districts have. Ms. Bechdol advised buying a curriculum is only a resource so the work is still involved in developing a curriculum.

NWEA

Dr. V provided an informative NWEA Report.

- Three years of K-12 data of all students regardless of whether or not they have three data points (apples to oranges comparison)
- Three years of K-12 data of students with all three data points (apples to apples comparison)
- Subgroup analysis

- Special Education
- Economically Disadvantaged
- English Language Learners
- Ethnicity : Asian, Black, Hispanic, White

Dr. V noted the district will continue to do the following to increase student achievement:

- 2015-2016--Year 3 of embedded professional development (studio) with teachers
- 2015-2016-- Year 3 of a fully staffed coaching department to serve the needs of teachers and principals
- 2015-2016--Year 1 of a stabilized elementary curriculum in ELA and Math; year 3 of math module implementation; year 3 of a balanced literacy approach
- 2015-2016--Year 3 of implementing data-driven protocols in Response to Intervention (RtI), Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), and regular content/grade level meetings
- 2015-2016--Expansion of the AVID (Achievement Via Individual Determination) program from the high school to the middle schools and North Albany Academy-Year 1
- In 2015-2016 the Principal Learning Walks will focus on Student Engagement as defined under the 5 Dimensions of Learning. Differentiated support and training will be provided through Principal Cycle of Inquiries. Monthly trainings will be held for newer (5 years or less) principals with a focus on instructional leadership.

DISCUSSION

Policies

5405 Wellness Policies – Review to follow next meeting 6/18

9180 Staff Use of Personal Electronical Devices for Work- Related Duties- Review to follow next meeting 6/18

ACTION

Professional Development Plan

Ms. Farrell requested a motion to approve the Professional Development Plan. Mr. Owens made a motion. Mr. Bruce seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the Professional Development Plan.

Motion passed

ROUTINE CONSENT

Routine Consent Items were presented as follow: Proceedings of Meeting (May 7, 2015, May 19 Canvass of Vote); Human Resource Items; Treasurer's Report; Budget Transfers under \$10,000; Budget Transfers over \$10,000; Revenue Status Report; Appropriation Status Report; Central Treasurer's Report for Extra Classroom Activity Fund; Grant Financials; Bid Award (Bid #16-419 Interscholastic Supplies; Approval of Extra Classroom Activity Club – JROTC; Field Trips

(ASH – Jackson, NJ, Myers – Boston, MA, PHES – Liberty Ctr., NJ); Authorization to Enter Into Contracts; Recommendations of the Committee on Special Education of **May 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, and 29, 2015**, Recommendations of the Subcommittee on Special Education of **May 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, and 29, 2015**, and Recommendations of the Committee on Pre-School Special Education finalized at meetings of **May 5, 6, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21, 27, and 28, 2015**.

Ms. Farrell requested a motion to amend the agenda to add HR and a resolution to appoint attorney. Ms. Adler made a motion. Mr. Owens seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to amend the agenda
Motion passed

Ms. Farrell requested a motion to approve Routine consent absent set asides. Ms. Adler made a motion. Mr. Owens seconded the motion.

Set asides

Short list of active funds, Interscholastic Supplies, JROTC Club, Field trips and Contracts.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve all Routine Consent absent set asides
Motion passed.

Ms. Farrell requested a motion to approve Interscholastic Supplies. Ms. Adler made a motion and Mr. Owens seconded the motion.

Mr. Owens stated the total was incorrect on page three.

Ms. Farrell requested a motion to approve the new total of thirty-five.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion
Motion passed.

Ms. Farrell requested a motion to approve the JROTC Club. Ms. Adler made a motion. Mr. Owens seconded the motion.

Mr. Bruce specified the JROTC Club should be renamed to NDCC JROTC Club which included changing article one to apply to the name change. NDCC stands for National Defense Cadet Corps.

Ms. Farrell made a motion to approve the NDCC JROTC Club with the name change.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.
Motion Passed

Ms. Farrell requested a motion to approve field trips. Ms. Adler made a motion. Mr. Owens seconded the motion.

Mr. Bruce inquired about the marching band field trip and how the cost is covered. Ms. Farrell stated that the parents pay for the trip.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion
Motion Passed

Ms. Farrell made a motion to approve short List of Active Funds. Mr. Bruce made a motion. Ms. Savage seconded the motion.

Mr. Bruce questioned about Incarcerated Youth Albany County Jail and what the School districts participation is there. Mr. Bruce was informed the district has employees there.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the motion.

Motion Passed

Ms. Farrell requested for a motion to approve contracts. Mr. Owens made a motion. Ms. Adler seconded the motion.

Mr. Bruce questioned the logic of having four separate contracts for Make a Play with Urban Arts and Fourth Family. Dr. V advised there are separate contracts because they are funded separately. Mr. Bruce questioned how the two hundred students selected through the Avid College and Career Readiness Program. Mr. Bruce was advised the Avid program starts with guidance counselors recommending the students.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to approve Routine Consent Items.

Motion Passed

After approving the Routine consent items, Dr. V welcomed and congratulated the new Middle School Principle Ms. Kandie Antonetti.

BOARD COMMITTEES

Ms. Farrell stated the Policy Committee met two times.

BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

Ms. Savage questioned people supporting the Policy Committee regarding school flyers. Ms. Savage stated there is no policy or procedure delegating who has the right to pass out flyers at the schools.

Mr. Bruce and Ms. Adler also inquired about an update on Albany Promise and what they do.

Mr. Bruce inquired about updates for NDCC JROTC and also maturing and planning of bonds of middle schools.

Mr. Bruce requested the Treasurer and the internal auditor make an appearance at a future Board meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Savage questioned about the school surveys that were just handed out and when the time frame would be to have these evaluated. Ms. Bechdol informed Ms. Savage the results would come in July 28th. Ms. Savage stated it would be a good idea to send these surveys via email.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Farrell called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Adler made a motion. Ms. Savage seconded the motion.

The Board voted unanimously (6-0) to adjourn the Board meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 p.m.