

**ROCKFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS**

*Administration Building
July 22, 2008*

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Rockford Board of Education was called to order by President Nancy Kalchbrenner at 4:39 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Nancy Kalchbrenner, Vice President Michael J. Williams, Secretary David L. Kelley, Mr. Robert Evans (arrived 4:55 p.m.), Mr. Harmon Mitchell (arrived 4:43 p.m.), Mrs. Alice Saudargas, Mrs. Jeannē K. Westholder (arrived 4:49 p.m.)

SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH FIRM INTERVIEW

School Exec Connect representatives presented their search firm proposal to the Board.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Mr. Williams, **seconded** by Mr. Kelley, that the Board hold a Closed Session in Room 202 to consider the appointment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of employees; the discipline of students; pending or imminent litigation; or other matters provided for pursuant to §2 (c) of the Open Meetings Act. **Approved** unanimously on roll call, adjourning for closed session at 5:06 p.m.

The Board was in closed session from 5:18 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

Motion by Mr. Williams, **seconded** by Mr. Kelley, that the Board reconvene in Open Session. **Approved** on voice vote.

Following the closed session, President Kalchbrenner made the following statement: The Board in closed session considered the appointment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of employees; the discipline of students; pending or imminent litigation; or other matters provided for pursuant to §2(c) of the Open Meetings Act. Action will be taken on eleven items in open session.

RECESS

Motion by Mr. Williams, **seconded** by Mr. Kelley, that the meeting be recessed at 7:00 p.m. until 7:10 p.m. **Approved** on voice vote.

CALL TO ORDER

President Nancy Kalchbrenner called the regular meeting of the Rockford Board of Education to order at 7:14 p.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Following a moment of silence, the Pledge of Allegiance was given.

ROLL CALL

Present: President Nancy Kalchbrenner, Vice President Michael J. Williams, Secretary David L. Kelley, Mr. Robert Evans, Mr. Harmon Mitchell, Mrs. Alice Saudargas, Mrs. Jeannē K. Westholder.

Mrs. Kalchbrenner introduced Auburn High School students Alvin Gibson, Zandy Shields, and Juan Carlos-Gonzalez. On behalf of the entire Board, she thanked them for their assistance in operating the camera and sound equipment in order to telecast this Board meeting.

Mrs. Kalchbrenner also welcomed the new Executive Assistant to the Board, Julia Halsted.

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS

1. *Flossie Hoarde, 701 Miriam Ave. She suggested the Board consider using manufacturing industry practices as a model for producing quality results. She also expressed her concern related to the costs of the gifted program move.*
2. *Lisa Jackson, Rockford, IL. Interim Superintendent was approved for a pay increase at the last Board meeting. She expressed her concern for failing black children in schools. She believes that the Board has ignored the results of the administration by granting pay increases.*
3. *Dione Baldwin, Rockford, IL. She indicated her feeling that the reason for lack of change in the schools is due to the lack of change of School Board members. She asked, "When is it time to step down?"*
4. *Yahcolyah Muhammad, Rockford, IL. Colleen Cyrus recently presented district initiatives to address diversity issues. He suggested that the issue relates to the dismissal of Dr. Kenneth Jackson. He believes the dismissal was not simply a personnel issue, but a personal issue.*

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Nancy Kalchbrenner explained that the Board has been spending time in retreat proactively discussing issues related to the overall work in the district. The retreat will continue on Monday, July 28, 2008.

RECOGNITION OF GIFTS TO SCHOOLS

Mrs. Kalchbrenner thanked Mr. Sunil Puri for the donation of two parcels of land adjacent to Washington School. There were no objections; the Board accepted this gift.

CONSENT ITEMS

Motion by Mrs. Saudargas, seconded by Mr. Williams, that the Board approve the following consent items:

- A. Approval of Minutes – June 24, 2008 and July 8 and 10, 2008
- B. Personnel
- C. Payroll
- D. Accounts Payable Checks
- E. Purchase Orders
- F. Contracts \$10,000 & Under
- G. Airfare
- H. Bid Recommendations
- I. Closed Session Item - Student Discipline

- a. Student Discipline: JG #1
That the student whose case was heard in closed session be expelled from school and all school-sponsored activities and prohibited from being on school grounds without the prior written permission of the principal for the entire 2008-2009 school year with recommendation for alternative placement, and the ten (10) day suspension is affirmed.
- b. Student Discipline: JF #2
That the student whose case was heard in closed session be expelled from school and all school-sponsored activities and prohibited from being on school grounds without the prior written permission of the principal for the entire 2008-2009 school year with recommendation for alternative placement, and the ten (10) day suspension is affirmed.
- c. Student Discipline: JMG #3
That the student whose case was heard in closed session be suspended for ten (10) days.
- d. Student Discipline: NM #4
That the student whose case was heard in closed session be suspended for ten (10) days.
- e. Student Discipline: VM #5
That the student whose case was heard in closed session be suspended for six (6) days.
- f. Student Discipline: MC #6:
That the student whose case was heard in closed session be expelled from school and all school-sponsored activities and prohibited from being on school grounds without the prior written permission of the principal for the entire 2008-2009 school year with recommendation for alternative placement, and the ten (10) day suspension is affirmed.

J. Closed Session Item - Administrative Appointments

- 1. Stephanie Hess: 11-month Assistant Principal; *Transfer Rescinded*
- 2. William Lavery: 10-month Assistant Principal
- 3. Shaun Newmes: 10-month Assistant Principal
- 4. Patricia Swanson-Bergren: 10-month Assistant Principal
- 5. William Trow: 11-month Assistant Principal
- 6. Amanda McKirgan-Hayes: 10-month Assistant Principal
- 7. Shirley Chrestman: 12-month Assistant Director of Special Education
- 8. Paul Yankee: 12-month Director of Bilingual Education

K. Other Consent Items:

~~Non-Bargaining FY09 Compensation Schedule~~ - *pulled by administration.*

Items pulled for further clarification:

H. Bid Recommendations – pulled by Mrs. Westholder

- 1. Library Shelving for King & Washington Schools
- 2. Elevator Upgrade at West Middle School
- 3. Vault Demolition at Washington School

Consent items not pulled approved unanimously on roll call.

- 1. Library Shelving for King & Washington Schools – Recommendation on Invitation for Bid No. 8-52

Motion by Mr. Evans, seconded by Mr. Kelley, to approve Bid 8-52.

Mrs. Westholder expressed her concern with the additional unknown costs related to the gifted program move. She requests advance notice of these considerations in the future.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the bulk of the project will take place at King. Approximately 16,000 books will be moved from Washington to King which will require additional shelving. This will also solve traffic flow problems on the second floor at King. The balance of the project will include book carts, seating, and carousel counters for Washington. The Washington portion (furniture) of the project, excluding the gifted program portion, is within budget. In response to Mrs. Westholder, Mr. Schmidt stated that the specifications were not returned for review at the time of the last meeting. The initial budget did include the furniture.

In response to Mr. Williams, Mrs. Strothoff stated that a library inventory would be completed at Washington, following both the Washington and West moves, to determine the needs of the Washington library. The books being moved to King are the books that were funded by that program's budget.

Mrs. Kalchbrenner stated that if there are no objections, Mr. Williams would proceed with his concerns regarding the costs, in general, related to the moves. He was disturbed by the increasing total cost of the Washington location improvements. He suggested that these purchases are based on student profile/preferential treatment, rather than necessity. He requested a traffic study to justify the paving.

Mr. Mitchell mentioned that the paving was not included in the initial budget because it was an unforeseen cost because of the gift of land.

Mr. Hoffman provided past, current, and anticipated student population, transportation data, and unique location characteristics considered in developing the pavement proposal; Mr. Evans concluded that the information indicated changes in student needs and the need to contemplate scale-to-scale comparisons.

Mr. Williams asked the Board to acknowledge the paving expense as an unplanned accommodation to this particular program and to consider postponing this project for further research.

Mrs. Kalchbrenner reminded the Board that the rules were suspended for voting on this program-move last meeting; the motion was approved unanimously.

Ayes: Mr. Kelley, Mr. Mitchell, Mrs. Saudargas, Mrs. Westholder, Mr. Evans, Mrs. Kalchbrenner
Nays: Mr. Williams
Approved: 6-1.

2. Vault Demolition at Washington School – Recommendation Invitation for Bid No. 09-05

Motion by Mr. Kelley, seconded by Mr. Evans, to approve Bid 09-05.

In response to Mrs. Westholder, Mr. Schmidt described the traffic routing/security roll of the project. In response to Mr. Williams, he provided the budget perimeters. In response to Mrs. Westholder, he explained the timeline required, which could not be met by the lower bidder.

Mrs. Kalchbrenner stated the district-wide goal of increasing security in the schools.

Ayes: Mr. Kelley, Mr. Mitchell, Mrs. Saudargas, Mr. Evans, Mrs. Kalchbrenner
Nays: Mr. Williams, Mrs. Westholder
Approved: 5-2.

3. Elevator Upgrade at West Middle School – Recommendation Invitation for Bid No. 09-04

Motion by Mrs. Saudargas, seconded by Mr. Kelley, to approve Bid 09-04.

Mr. Schmidt explained the frequent maintenance calls on this elevator, as well as upcoming changes in law that will require the upgrade of several elevators in the district.

Approved unanimously on roll call.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent's Comments: *As we continue to enjoy the summer, teachers and staff are taking advantage of staff development opportunities offered by the District. The knowledge gained by attending these workshops will benefit students throughout the year. We will be ready for the first day of school on August 25th. Remember to read, read, read.*

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Education Committee: *Mr. Evans recommended the Board suspend the rules for the motions to be considered.*

Motion to suspend the rules by Mrs. Saudargas, **seconded** by Mr. Williams.

Objection by Mrs. Westholder.

Ayes: Mr. Evans, Mrs. Kalchbrenner, Mr. Williams, Mr. Kelley, Mr. Mitchell, Mrs. Saudargas

Nays: Mrs. Westholder

Approved: 6-1.

Mr. Evans presented the following recommendations (1-3.)

1. *Student Expulsions Process: that the Board instruct the administration to develop and implement procedures to expedite, as much as possible, the appeal process for student expulsions. These efforts should be consistent with due process consideration for students.*

Motion by Mr. Evans, **seconded** by Mr. Williams to approve Recommendation 1.

Approved unanimously on roll call.

2. *Safety and Discipline Procedures: that the Board instruct the administration to develop general procedures for improving safety and discipline conditions in the schools. These general measures will consist of four activities.*
 - *Conduct a school climate survey.*
 - *Create a task force for each school composed of appropriate district employees, parents, community members, and representatives of law enforcement. These task forces will address safety and discipline issues.*
 - *Implement school-based and grade-level-based teams to address safety and discipline issues.*
 - *Reinforce building-wide behavior plans through appropriate measures.*

In response to Mrs. Westholder: Dr. Schmitt stated that the climate surveys will be consistent among grade levels across the district. Mr. Evans clarified that the schools will take the lead on implementing and reporting results of these programs, while criteria and accountability will be imposed from Board to Administration to Schools.

Mr. Williams reiterated the importance of focusing less on deadlines and more on progress and follow-up on the program.

Mrs. Kalchbrenner stated the importance of accountability and for improving safety and discipline procedures. She thanked the Ed Committee for their work on these recommendations.

Motion by Mr. Evans, **seconded** by Mrs. Saudargas to approve Recommendation 2.

Approved unanimously on roll call.

3. *Safety and Discipline Programs: that the Board instruct the administration to develop and implement certain specific programs for improving safety and discipline conditions in the schools. These specific programs will be adopted (chosen) as appropriate by schools. The programs will be selected and goals identified for each program. Progress towards the goals will be measured and assessed.*

Selection of programs, by each school, will be from a list of proven programs within the following categories:

- *Training in safety and security*
- *Peer mentoring*
- *Training to address bullying problems*
- *Programs offering students after-school activities*
- *Training in problem-solving skills*
- *Training in anger coping skills*
- *Training in student leadership skills*

In response to Mrs. Westholder, Mr. Evans described the elements of the prescribed programs that have been proven most effective, including the option for each school to choose which is most appropriate for their own challenges.

Mrs. Westholder requested access to the specific program list when they are available. She and Mr. Williams both recognized that there are schools in the district that have already proactively implemented similar programs. She also suggested that the County Justice Program research, and/or a partnership, will be considered.

Mr. Williams wants to ensure the schools are given the leeway to identify proven programs themselves.

Mrs. Kalchbrenner expanded on the necessity of placing some level of trust in and giving responsibility to the administration.

Motion by Mr. Evans, **seconded** by Mr. Kelly to approve Recommendation 3.

Approved unanimously on roll call.

Mr. Evans added that the committee wishes to work closely with the police department. The issue of truancy was not included in these recommendations, because of the complexity of the issue, it deserves to be treated separately.

Operations Committee: *No report, per Mr. Kelley.*

ACTION ITEMS

Contract for External Evaluator, Dr. J.D. Bowers for 2007-2008 Teaching American History Grant

Motion by Mr. Williams, **seconded** by Mr. Kelley to approve Contract for External Evaluator, Dr. J.D. Bowers.

Approved unanimously on roll call.

OTHER BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS/AGENDA RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Board Policy 4.170 – Operational Services; Safety Program

Attorney Katz explained changes in state law relating to the definition of physical fitness facilities and references to sex offenders; both of which require updates to the Board policy.

