

# The Education Committee of the SW Common Council

Wednesday, May 22, 2019

6:30 to 8:00 pm at

Arnett Branch Library, 310 Arnett Boulevard

Minutes Posted on: [www.locationSW.org/group/sw-education-forum](http://www.locationSW.org/group/sw-education-forum)

## Attendance:

Brian Babcock	19th Ward Resident, 969-3222, <a href="mailto:bryan@14619.org">bryan@14619.org</a>
Christin Babcock	19th Ward Resident, 633-7480, <a href="mailto:christinmae@gmail.com">christinmae@gmail.com</a>
John Boutet	SWCC Education Committee Chair, 328-4271, <a href="mailto:jboutet@frontiernet.net">jboutet@frontiernet.net</a>
Andria Bryant	<a href="mailto:alexandrea05108@yahoo.com">alexandrea05108@yahoo.com</a>
Jackie Campbell	19th Ward Resident, ROC the Future, <a href="mailto:jackie@thechildrensagenda.org">jackie@thechildrensagenda.org</a>
Eleanor Coleman	CFC YouthBuild, 224-5119, <a href="mailto:eleanor.coleman@gmail.com">eleanor.coleman@gmail.com</a>
Pat Connor	Rochester Public Library, 428-8398, <a href="mailto:patricia.connor@libraryweb.org">patricia.connor@libraryweb.org</a>
Judith Davis	RCSD School Commissioner, FR=EE Facilitator, 261-1180
Howard Eagle	<a href="mailto:howard.eagle90@gmail.com">howard.eagle90@gmail.com</a>
Minister Florence	<a href="mailto:ministercliffordflorence@gmail.com">ministercliffordflorence@gmail.com</a> , 325-6043
Cecilia Golden	RCSD Dep Supt/Teaching & Learning
John Laing	19WCA Schools Comm & Sch #16 Vol, 235-5236, <a href="mailto:jlaing1@rochester.rr.com">jlaing1@rochester.rr.com</a>
Theresa Lippa	Mo Co 4-H, 753-2568, <a href="mailto:tel49@cornell.edu">tel49@cornell.edu</a>
Ebony McLarty	School #16 PTE Member, 305-8364, <a href="mailto:mclartyeb@gmail.com">mclartyeb@gmail.com</a>
Betsy Romson	19th Ward Resident, 328-8313
Alicia Ward	ATTAIN Lab, 820-7672, <a href="mailto:award_1civic@yahoo.com">award_1civic@yahoo.com</a>

**Dr. Cecilia Golden**, Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, joined us to talk about the "*Distinguished Educator's Action Plan for Culturally Responsible Instruction Strategy, Parent Engagement*"- The full Presentation was videoed and can be found at: <https://youtu.be/BHXUwYeNdTA> and has much more detail than can be captured here in the minutes. Thank you for the excellent presentation and group participation.

- Jaime Aquino still working on the Distinguished Educator's Plan asking what some of the root causes for poor academics and low graduation rates are. District Board responded; Administration staff also had a separate response. Commissioner came back and said the responses were not coherent enough. RCSD agreed that the report was more of an overview and disparate. Coming back now with a more comprehensive response.
- Curriculum Council exists and meets once a month or once every month to develop a waiver process. They are looking for parent and community representation.
- Theory of Action has been developed to guide how to respond.
- 25% of students move and/or transfer schools within the same year. Important to have culturally diverse curriculum that has a higher chance of engaging students. Professional development has to address teacher beliefs, attitudes & competencies.
- Instructional framework starts with NY State Standards; assessments must align to the standards. Pre-assessments determine baselines.
- Student work review should show if students are having access to grade level content and standards. Pre-teaching is important to help students better prepare for grade level tests. If nothing changes at the classroom level, nothing changes.
- Culturally responsive instruction. Every child brings their assets to the classroom and these become part of the learning in the classroom each day.
- Need to talk about racism: what is it, who is affected by it, what is the history of it in America, what can be done about it. African American perspective is missing in almost all core subjects; omissions as well as errors.

**SWCC Education Committee Chair, John Boutet**, 328-4271, [jboutet@frontiernet.net](mailto:jboutet@frontiernet.net)  
**19thWCA Schools Committee Chair, John Laing**, 235-5236, [jlaing1@rochester.rr.com](mailto:jlaing1@rochester.rr.com)

- Parent Engagement & Community Involvement vacancy for the Director position; interviewing now. Goal is to improve parent engagement experiences, increase the number of parents directly involved in the school level and at the District level and find a more formal way of capturing the parent voice. We have not seen a fundamental transformation in this area. Need to agree on the root causes of the academic failures of our students. What does parent engagement mean in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century when parents have job limitations (more than one job, students at different schools, financial barriers, etc.). Busing also a big barrier; why are we still busing students when the initial focus was on integrating schools and we now have schools that are predominantly black and brown; what about having meetings at community locations?

### **FEEDBACK:**

- Some parents work evenings and there should be multiple meetings at different times made available.
- MANY robo-calls coming during the day, especially when student is missing from schools. This was the response because of the student who died last year. Some find it a barrier when they have child enrolled in two programs within a school and get double the calls. It was noted that, as soon as you call the office to address an attendance issue, the calls will stop. Some parents want to know exactly when their child is not in attendance.
- Do a better job promoting meetings; finding out to late or not at all that important meetings are being held.
- Parents don't feel welcome; we need a core of volunteers who show up at parent homes to reach out.
- There are other cultures within the District; African and African American Studies focus is Board driven as most of our students are African American. Cultural education is meant to address all cultures.
- Program brochures should be mailed to parents letting them know what programming is offered. Don't rely on online marketing.
- How can students be moved to new grade levels without mastering the previous level? Once a child is a certain age, they are being moved to the next grade; isn't this social promotion, which the District says they don't do? In 9<sup>th</sup> grade, "social promotion" stops and students can't be promoted anymore, which is why you see so many drop-outs at that time.
- Teachers don't have the skill set and competencies to teach the struggling reader. Need to do something different if a child isn't learning with a teacher who has their own style; research shows you cannot repeat the same style and hope for success.
- Working strategy: put low readers with high readers.
- Concern expressed about substitute teachers who are not aware of student needs. Sometimes teachers go out and, if there isn't a replacement, students will be farmed out to other classrooms where their needs are not addressed. Not enough Special Education Certified teachers. Not enough teachers; competing with suburban schools, private schools and charter schools.
- Most parents do not have the resources to address academic issues at home.
- We don't have overall good schools; some pockets of good schools (School of the Arts, World of Inquiry).
- New teachers are being put in the worst classrooms with no support (TA's on the phone and not responsive). It was noted that all new teachers are assigned a mentor.
- TA's only assigned to Special Ed classes and oversubscribed classrooms until the under-staffing addressed.
- 60,000 in Rochester are of-age but do not have a H.S. Diploma.

**Latest developments on new superintendent selection:** info on [Terry Dade](#)

- Hand-out provided

**Community Schools:** Mayor in favor of Community Schools - [Local Busing Initiative](#).

**Square Fair planning - A great chance to recruit local families and volunteers**

- Square Fair is 6/1; RCSD has planned an event on the same day. Fair is a perfect place to market RCSD schools in the community. Fair has been on the first Saturday of the month since its inception; .
- Starts with a Pancake Breakfast at 8am. Parade at 11am. Lots of entertainment, vendors and activities for kids.

**Library – Pat Connor**

- TASC & Citizenship classes funded through June.
- City Library Website – Pronunciator.
- VIP Pass can be checked out - discounted admissions to some museums and cultural programming.
- Empire Pass can be obtained for free admission into any NYS Park – check it out just as you would a book.
- Summer Reading will be held this summer. Strong offering admissions as a raffle prize if you attend summer reading.

**4-H – Theresa Lippa**

- Supplemental education in and after school and in the community. Volunteer-based; volunteer can lead the club and get support.
- School #29 In-School Club; 8 UR volunteers are working with students with behavioral needs.
- Very adaptable programming.
- Have an Urban Fellow who will be working with young people to learn public speaking.
- Check with Jackie Farrell to get involved with kids at Westside Farmers Market.
- Alicia suggested checking with Toastmasters Clubs to get kids to feel comfortable with public speaking.

**ATTAIN Lab – Alicia Ward**

- Computer-based job skills.
- Rosetta Stone which complements the Pronunciator
- Working with U.S. Census, Tues 5/28, 12-4

**CFC YouthBuild – Update**

- YouthBuild recruiting now for next Cohort, which starts the last week in June.

Scribe Services: Eleanor Coleman, YouthBuild & OACES/NEDP, 224 -5119, [eleanor.coleman@gmail.com](mailto:eleanor.coleman@gmail.com)