Special Legislative Meeting

September 19, 2007
THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15213
Administration Building
341 South Bellefield Avenue

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

September 19, 2007

ROLL CALL

A. COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

1. Acceptance of $79,425 from the Fund for Excellence to support an external evaluation of the District’s elementary (K-5) math curricula—Harcourt Mathematics and Everyday Mathematics [Roll Call]

2. Authorization to enter into a contract with Mathematica Policy Resarch, Inc. to conduct an evaluation of the District’s Elementary (K-5) math curricula – Harcourt Mathematics and Everyday Mathematics for an amount not to exceed $79,425 from account line 1300-05H-2813-330. [Roll Call]

NEW BUSINESS

We are an equal rights and opportunity school district.
RESOLVED, that the Pittsburgh Board of Education approve the acceptance of $79,425 from The Fund for Excellence to support an external evaluation of the District's elementary (K-5) math curricula —Harcourt Mathematics and Everyday Mathematics. The funding period shall be from September 19, 2007, through December 31, 2007. The purpose of the evaluation is to assist the District in determining which curriculum is best suited to addressing the needs of District students, particularly with regard to closing the racial achievement gap. This evaluation also assists the District in fulfilling the terms of the Conciliation Agreement the District signed on September 27, 2006 with the Advocates for African American Students.
RESOLVED, that the Pittsburgh Board of Education authorize the District’s proper officers to execute a contract with Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., as the external evaluator to conduct an evaluation of the District’s elementary (K-5) math curricula—Harcourt Mathematics and Everyday Mathematics for an amount not to exceed $79,425 over the time period of September 19, 2007 through December 31, 2007. The principal investigators for Mathematica on this work will be Dr. Brian Gill, Dr. T. Kevin Booker, and Dr. Catherine Awsumb Nelson. This contract will be charged to account line 1300-05H-2813-330, which is funded by a grant award from the Fund for Excellence.
TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

---

PITTSBURGH BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION
SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2007
6:06 P.M.
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - BOARD COMMITTEE ROOM

---

BEFORE:

WILLIAM ISLER, BOARD PRESIDENT
MARK BRENTLEY
DANIEL ROMANIELLO, SR.
THOMAS SUMPTER
THERESA COLAIZZI
PATRICK DOWD
FLOYD McCREA

---

MEMBERS ABSENT:

RANDALL TAYLOR
JEAN FINK

---

ALSO PRESENT:

MR. MARK ROOSEVELT
MR. IRA WEISS
MR. RICHARD R. FELLERS
MR. FRANK G. CHESTER
MR. HOWARD BULLARD
MR. CHRIS BERDNIK
MR. DERRICK LOPEZ

---

REPORTED BY: MELISSA L. FENSTER
PROFESSIONAL COURT REPORTER

---

COMPUTER-AIDED TRANSCRIPTION BY
MORSE, GANTVERG & HODGE, INC.
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
412-281-0189

---

ORIGINAL
MR. ISLER: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to call the
September 19, 2007 Pittsburgh Board of Public
Education Special Legislative Meeting to order. Thank
you. We only have two items this evening.

Before we begin, I would like Mr. Weiss to
please call the role.

Mr. Weiss?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Brentley?

MR. BRENTLEY: Here.

MR. WEISS: Ms. Colaizzi?

MS. COLAIZZI: Here.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Dowd?

MR. DOWD: Present.

MR. WEISS: Mrs. Fink is absent.

Mr. McCrea?

MR. McCREA: Here.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Romaniello?

MR. ROMANIELLO: Here.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Sumpter?

MR. SUMPTER: Present.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Taylor, absent.

Mr. Isler?

MR. ISLER: Present.
MR. WEISS: Seven members present.

MR. ISLER: Thank you, Mr. Weiss.

We have two items for the Committee on Education. They both are before us. One is the acceptance of $79,425 from the Fund for Excellence to support an external evaluation for the district's elementary K-5 math curriculum, Harcourt Mathematics, and Everyday Mathematics.

The second is the authorization to enter into a contract with Mathematica Policy Research to conduct the evaluation for the district's K-5 math curriculum, and that cost is the same as the acceptance of the grant, $79,425, so these funds are coming from the foundation community to support the ongoing work of Excellence for All.

Correct, Mr. Roosevelt?

MR. ROOSEVELT: Correct.

MR. ISLER: Just to deviate, if it's okay with you, Mr. Sumpter, since these are coming out of your committee, if there are any questions, we will take those now or comments?

Mr. Brentley?

MR. BRENTLEY: Yes, just a question. The two items here are related?

MR. ISLER: Yes, sir.
MR. BRENTLEY: Okay. The process used for identifying the company to provide the evaluation for the K-5, how did we come about this company, and what was the process used?

MR. ISLER: Dr. Poncelet?

DR. PONCELET: Yes. Mathematica is one of the pre-eminent research organizations in the country, and they do have considerable credibility and history in evaluating school programs, especially mathematics programs. Mr. Brian Gill, who was with Rand in Pittsburgh, is now associated with Mathematica Policy Research Organization, and we believe that that organization will serve us well.

MR. BRENTLEY: Is there a reason why we were unable to either go through our MBE/WBE policy or put out a request for bids from other companies? How do we come about this company? They were --

How do we come up with this company?

DR. PONCELET: Based on the reputation of the company.

MR. BRENTLEY: There were no requests for bids or it was not put out for other companies to put in a bid or --

DR. PONCELET: No, it was not put out for bid.
MR. BRENTLEY: Okay. Mr. President, I will not be supporting these two items. I'm trying to encourage our staff, as well as my colleagues that we included or find a way to open up our process when giving contracts for foods and services to the women/minority business community.

To not even to consider them is somewhat of an insult. We do have quite a few service providers in the city, probably even nationally had this bid been put out nationally or at least given other companies an opportunity. So I will not be supporting this; and, once again, I'll ask my colleagues to please keep in mind that we find a way to open this process when giving contracts out.

MR. ISLER: Thank you, Mr. Brentley.

Mr. Romaniello?

MR. ROMANIELLO: I just have a question.

Can we vote on both of these at the same time or --

MR. ISLER: Yes, we can. We can take it as a committee on the whole.

MR. WEISS: It's like a report.

MR. ISLER: It's like the agenda. We're just role calling.

Any other questions or comments?
(No response.)

Hearing none, Mr. Weiss, could we have a role call vote please on the Committee on Education, which are the two items that I mentioned earlier.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Brentley?

MR. BRENTLEY: No.

MR. WEISS: Ms. Colaizzi?

MS. COLAIZZI: Yes.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Dowd?

MR. DOWD: Yes.

MR. WEISS: Mr. McCrea?

MR. McCREA: Yes.

MR. WEISS: Romaniello?

MR. ROMANIELLO: Yes.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Sumpter?

MR. SUMPTER: Yes.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Isler?

MR. ISLER: Yes.

MR. WEISS: It's approved six to one, with two absent.

MR. ISLER: Thank you, Mr. Weiss.

At this time, there's no other formal business to come before this legislative meeting.

MR. DOWD: Motion to adjourn.

MR. ISLER: Can we have a motion to
adjourn.

MS. COLAIIZZI: Yes, so moved.

MR. ISLER: Let me be clear here folks before we go. The only two items we had were in the purple folder. What else is coming around are some updated items for Agenda Review, so we don't confuse the two.

Motion to adjourn?

MR. DOWD: Moved.

MS. COLAIIZZI: Moved and second.

MR. ISLER: Meeting adjourned.

---

(Thereupon, at 6:08 p.m., the Special Legislative Meeting was concluded.)

---
C-E-R-T-I-F-I-C-A-T-E

I, Melissa L. Fenster, the undersigned, do hereby certify that the foregoing seven (7) pages are a true and correct transcript of my stenotypy notes taken of the Special Legislative Meeting held in the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education, Board Committee Room, on Wednesday, September 19, 2007.

Melissa L. Fenster, Court Reporter