

Central Falls School District
Meeting Minutes – December 5, 2018
Central Falls High School
5:30pm

I) Call to Order and Roll Call- The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Anna Cano-Morales at 5:37pm. A roll call was taken. Board Members Present: Anna Cano-Morales, Stephanie Gonzalez, Andrew Bramson, Diosa Martinez, Ron Pitt, and Sonia Grace. Excused: Hugo Figueroa

II) Pledge- The pledge was led by Councilwoman Maria Rivera.

III) Approval of the meeting minutes of October 24, 2018. Tabled.

IV) Approval of personnel actions including any new appointments, rescission, resignations, recalls, and retirements:

None presented.

V) Approval of bills – Grants and General Budget:

None presented.

VI) Discussion of RICAS scores.

Superintendent Capellan presented the results of the Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS).

RICAS is the Massachusetts MCAS Test rebranded for RI. RICAS uses four performance levels and scale scores that range from 440 to 560.

The State of Rhode Island did not do as well on the test when compared to Massachusetts.

Central Falls Schools scored 10% on ELA and 7% on the Math, compared to 34% and 27% respectively for the state.

The district plans to take immediate action with urgency and purpose to accelerate the implementation of the District Redesign.

VII) Board Comments:

Chairwoman Cano-Morales proposed visiting Lawrence, MA to see their school turnaround. She also asked that we look into the possibility of creating an International Baccalaureate program.

Mr. Bramson asked for disaggregated data grade by grade and for a side-by-side comparison of all Central Falls students regardless of what school they attend.

Ms. Gonzalez expressed her frustration and while she appreciates the energy she wants to see data for how students are doing on other district exams.

Ms. Martinez expressed disappointment as a parent of an English language learner and wants to know what else we can do to support our students.

Mr. Pitt expressed how the Math challenge can be a great obstacle if our students are not succeeding in math.

VIII) Public Comments

Mayor Diossa warned that we cannot be complacent and pledged to continue supporting the work being done in the district to redesign our schools.

Councilwoman Maria Rivera expressed her frustration about not much changing in 23 years since the state took over. She stated that we should look at what charters are doing and also that we need to add more resources for our teachers and guidance counselors. She stated that we need to take action and pledged her support.

Ms. Jahaira Rodriguez a community member spoke of the failures of the school district. She stated that it is a shame that we continue to be on the bad list. She stated that we have failed our kids. She asked for more after school programs, tutoring and other supports for students. She stated that she is recommitting to working to improve the schools.

Ms. Glendaliz Colon a parent of 4 Central Falls students spoke of her concerns about not receiving adequate communication about how her children are doing in school. She praised the work of one teacher, but stated that we as a district need to do more to engage students and to keep them from becoming bored.

Ms. Nancy Vasquez a community member spoke about the need to bring back the activities of the PTSOs in the schools.

Ms. Erica Prenda a teacher at Central Falls High School spoke about the emotional toll it takes on teachers to teach with large class sizes and to meet all the academic and social needs of the students. She ask for more supports for the teachers and staff. She invited anyone in the audience to visit her classroom.

Ms. Maria Cristina Betancur a staff member of the district spoke about her concerns and her frustrations with the schools. She stated that more support is needed for children who are learning English. She stated that she has fought hard to improve the schools and wants to continue working but stated that we need to work together. She also stated that teachers need to attend school on a daily basis.

Councilman Franklin Solano said he agreed with most of the statements previously made and stated that he believes we can do better.

Councilwoman-elect Jessica Vega says she understands that this is complex issue with many layers and so that we should think about creative solutions. She stated that she will work to be a part of the solution.

IX) Superintendent Comments

Superintendent Capellan stated that he feels that when the children fail, he has failed. He stated that he is responsible for these outcomes and pledge to continue working hard to make the necessary improvements.

Ms. Grace asked the superintendent to look at what has worked in the past and what did not so that we can adjust our strategy accordingly.

Chairwoman Cano-Morales stated that we will need to engage RIDE in the conversation and ask that we receive all the resources we need. She also stated that we will need to engage with the Central Falls Teachers' Union to work together on these issues.

- X) Ms. Grace moved to convene into Possible Executive Session, under RI General Laws 42-46-5 (a) (2) that this body convene in executive session to discuss certain matters that are the subject of collective bargaining and litigation, and to conduct work sessions pertaining to collective bargaining and litigation, seconded by Ms. Martinez--

Roll Call: Anna Cano-Morales, Stephanie Gonzalez, Andrew Bramson, Diosa Martinez, Ron Pitt, and Sonia Grace – All in favor. The board went into executive session at 7:09 p.m.

A motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session was made by Mr. Bramson and seconded by Ms. Grace. All in favor. Motion Approved.

A motion to be move out of executive session at 7:29 p.m. was made by Mr. Bramson and seconded by Ms. Gonzalez. All in favor. Motion Approved.

- XIV. Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Gonzalez and seconded by Mr. Bramson.

The board adjourned at 7:30 p.m.