

Central Falls School District
Meeting Minutes – December 19, 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 5:33pm. A roll call was taken. Board Members Present: Anna Cano-Morales, Stephanie Gonzalez, Hugo Figueroa, Andrew Bramson, Ron Pitt, and Sonia Grace (arrived at 5:40 p.m.). Excused: Diosa Martinez

II) Pledge- The pledge was led by Ms. Katie Gomes.

III) Approval of the meeting minutes of October 24, 2018. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Gonzalez and seconded by Mr. Bramson. All in favor

Approval of the meeting minutes of December 5 2018. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Bramson and seconded by Ms. Gonzalez. All in favor

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

New Hires:

- Jane Rocha Demelo, Special Educator, Central Falls High School
- Trevor Berard, Computer Technician, District
- Vanessa Cruz, PCA, Ella Risk
- Nicole Gonzalez, PCA, Ella Risk
- Veronica Martinez, Teacher Assistant, Captain Hunt

Recalls

- Ronald Lehman, ELA, Central Falls High School
- Nicholas Lafreniere, PE/Health, District.

Retirements

- Linda Nadeau, Teacher Assistant, Ella Risk

The board congratulates and thanks Ms. Nadeau for her service to the children of Central Falls and wishes her well upon her retirement.

V) Approval of bills – Grants and General Budget:

A motion to approve the bills pending approval from Ms. Grace was made by Mr. Bramson and seconded by Ms. Gonzalez. All in favor.

VI) School Building Committee Update- Superintendent Capellan informed the board that the Master Planning process was moving forward and conversations were ongoing with RIDE. Starting in January public input will be sought for the Master Plan. He also informed the board that the

district and the City of Central Falls were awarded close to \$1M for safety and security upgrades to the facilities.

VII) District/School Accountability Report:

Superintendent Capellan presented the board with a copy of the newly released District and School Accountability Report/Report Card as released by the Rhode Island Department of Education. The superintendent highlighted several areas of growth and noted the fact that a lot of work remains to be done. He stated being disappointed in some of the areas and noted for the board that for the first time in over a decade there are no Central Falls schools on the list of persistently low achieving schools from the state.

Superintendent Capellan detailed for the board the new RIDE accountability system that gives schools a rating using a five star system (one being the lowest). The ratings are a composite from various factors that take into account; the RICAS exam in both ELA and Math, growth over time, teacher and student attendance, suspension rates, and any gaps within identified subgroups, among others. Based on the new system, Central Falls High School received two stars, Calcutt Middle School received two stars, Veterans Memorial received two stars, Robertson Elementary received one star and Ella Risk received one star. Captain Hunt was not rated.

Mr. Bramson expressed his concerns that although there was some growth it is very thin between being one star and two stars. He also stated his disappointment with the high rate of absenteeism for both teachers and students.

Ms. Gonzalez expressed her frustration with the high rate of absenteeism for teachers and students. She also expressed her concerns about the low ACCESS scores.

Ms. Grace asked for more information about the subgroups that the district has been cited for.

Chairperson Cano-Morales expressed her disappointment on the attendance of both teachers and students. She also asked about how restorative practices were working in light of the number of suspensions reported. She reiterated the need to do more and double down on the things that are working in the district. She stated that we should not lose sight of the role of the art and music in this work.

VIII) Redesign Acceleration Discussion – Superintendent Capellan presented to the board a plan aimed at accelerating the District Redesign plans. The plan focuses on continuing to build and support the programs and activities that are yielding positive results in the district, such as the new literacy program, the support for English Language learners and professional development for the staff. The plan also calls for increasing student learning time by creating an extended learning time program after school, fostering great teaching and instructional leadership, accelerating and aligning funds and creating a sense of urgency for all.

Chairperson Cano-Morales expressed her concerns with the apathy and encouraged a sense of urgency amongst all stakeholders.

Mr. Bramson asked if we can review the graduation requirements to align more to the new demands and needs. Superintendent Capellan stated that the state provides regulations for the minimum required, but that the board had some discretion in regards to what they required for graduation from Central Falls High School.

Mr. Pitt asked how we were going to align the acceleration plan to target specific areas that led to the desired outcomes.

Chairperson Cano-Morales expressed her interest in reviewing the governance structures and reviewing what is the responsibility of the BOT in these matters.

Ms. Grace asked about the role of the RI Department of Education in these matters.

Ms. Gonzalez stated that in light of these results apathy from the staff was unacceptable. She also stated that we need to advocate for more funding for ELLs. She asked if the ELT programs should be looking to target grades PK-3 and then 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Ms. Grace asked to see more data on the subgroups and how we were going to address the need to close those gaps. She also stated that we may need to have a review of our current budget allocation with RIDE.

Chairperson Cano-Morales stated that we are district under the governance of the state and that we should have more involvement from RIDE.

Ms. Gonzalez stated that we should reach out to our reps and senator to ask for their advocacy.

Mr. Figueroa stated that we need to make sure that the teachers and students have the tools and resources necessary. He also stated that he thought that the teachers needed to present at the board meetings.

IX) Public Comments

Mr. Dioscaris Garcia stated that he was a graduate from the Class of 2000 from Central Falls High School and he stated that he stated his disappointment with the RICAS scores. He stated that the situation was created by gross neglect, and systemic failure. He stated that more oversight and urgency was needed. He stated the need teachers and administrators to be held accountable.

Councilman Franklin Solano expressed his disappointment with the RICAS scores and expressed his commitment to be a part of the solution.

Mr. Angelo Marin stated that he was a graduate from the Class of 2000 from Central Falls High School. He stated that we need true accountability. He asked who is being held accountable. He stated that it is disappointing to see the RICAS results.

Ms. Maria Lozano (speaking in Spanish) – Stated that she wants to be back involved and become part of the solution. She recommended that the documents should be in English and Spanish.

Councilman Thomas Lazzieh stated that he was Mayor in Central Falls and that as Mayor he was the one that initiated the state takeover of the district. He said the main reason was not financial it was to provide a better education. He said that in the MOU with the state, the state has an obligation to work with the city and that the state failed to do that.

Ms. Glendaliz Colon stated that she is a parent of 4 Central Falls Schools students. She said that we should review the attendance policy and specifically the policy that 4 tardies equals an absence. She was concerned that the check-in procedures at the high school made the students late and recommended that we may want to have a second check in location.

Ms. Jahaira Rodriguez stated that educators should be held accountable. She said to the teachers who were in the room that they needed to hold their peers accountable for being present every day.

Councilwoman-elect Vega stated that we need to create a culture of success and that she wants to be a part of building a better culture in our schools.

Chairperson Cano-Morales spoke about the need for more accountability for all stakeholders. She also expressed her disappointment and frustration with the absenteeism. She reminded everyone that we work as part of the state intervention process.

- X) Equity Policy Discussion – A motion to table was made by Ms. Grace and seconded by Mr. Bramson. All in favor.

XI) Superintendent Comments

Superintendent Capellan stated that he feels that moving forward with transparency and keeping the community involved is a priority for the work.

XII) Board Comments

Mr. Bramson reminded everyone that chronic absenteeism means that a person would have missed 18 days in one year or 10% of the work year.

Ms. Gonzalez said she was appreciative of the new voices and the comments made. She said that the Alumni Association wanted to host visits to see all the schools.

Mr. Figueroa thanked the teachers and parents who were in attendance at the meeting.

Chairperson Cano-Morales asked why all principals and administrators were not in attendance at the meeting. She requested that principals and administrators be present at future meetings.

- XIII) Ms. Grace moved to convene into Executive Session, under RI General Laws 42-46-5 (a) (1) and (2) (discussion of job performance, character or physical or mental health) (collective bargaining/litigation/legal advice) (teacher discipline hearing) and 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 Mr. Pitt.

Roll Call: Anna Cano-Morales, Stephanie Gonzalez, Andrew Bramson, Ron Pitt, Hugo Figueroa and Sonia Grace – All in favor. The board went into executive session at 7:41 p.m.

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

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

The board adjourned at 8:04 p.m.