

1/8/21 Rochester Coalition for Public Education Meeting Minutes

Present: John Boutet, Connie Flahive, Vicki Robertson, Chojoy Schroeder, Don Bartalo, Don Pryor, Mark Hare, Joe Smon, Ralph Spezio, Donna LaMura, Howie Maffucci, Dan Drmacich

Discussion & Decisions:

1. We welcomed new member, Joe Simson.
2. Dan shared that he has heard no response from Commissioner Rosa regarding our request for a meeting to discuss our proposal on high-stakes standardized testing and alternatives. He will follow-up with Supt. Myers-Small for assistance.
3. Don Pryor shared that the Parent Training Learning Institute Director, Deb Hanmer has invited Coalition members to attend their Zoom seminar for interested BoE & other govt. office candidates. We can observe & get an idea of possible candidates we may wish to support. You must register to participate.
Dan announced that Coalition & BoE member, Amy Malloy, shared that she is aware of at least 2 progressive candidates for the BoE.
Van White will not be running again in 2021.
4. In an effort to increase our diversity, Dan & Don shared that they have sent a letter to PTLI alumni to consider attending & joining our Coalition meetings.
5. To explore more religious organizational support for our education agenda, Donna & Ralph have initiated a meeting with the Asbury 1st United Methodist Church Pastor, to explore possibilities, on Jan. 19th.
6. We discussed and gave feedback on an addition to our RCSD Intervention Recommendations that focuses on RCSD staff learning how to build positive relationships with students & parents. Dan will revise & send out to Coalition members for additional feedback, that includes the use of multi-cultural curricula, anti-racism PD and accountability for implementation. We need to explore what the RTA's objections to this proposal might be. Dan will initiate that.
7. John Boutet announced that several members of the Southwest Community Education Council and our Coalition will meet with Mayor Warren on Jan. 14th to discuss the need for a state busing waiver that would encourage the formation of community/neighborhood schools.
8. Bart reported on the RASE City/County Commission on Racial Inequities education recommendations; they are progressing but the process for determining final recommendations is still uncertain. Bart & Dan will continue to lobby for the acceptance of Coalition supported recommendations.

9. At our next meeting we will listen to 20 minutes of a podcast involving the theme of "Nice White Parents," and discuss it. Bart & Howie will arrange.

10. Amy Maloy is sending Dan the contact information for BoE student representatives, for invitations to join our meetings.

11. Dan suggested that the Coalition create a resolution and/or recommendation advocating the requirement of "critical thinking" being a requirement for curricular integration into all RCSD subject areas, in order to reduce the non-factual & conspiratorial thinking that so many used in the Jan. 6th Washington D.C. insurrection. Attached is a guest essay by Dan that could be used as a beginning for defining such an initiative.

12. We agreed to meet again on Friday, January 22nd, by Zoom @ 4:00.