

3/5/21 Rochester Coalition for Public Education Meeting Minutes

Attendance: Diane Watkins, Don Bartalo, Connie Flahive, Chojoy Schroeder, John Boutet, Ralph Spezio, Don Pryor, Mark Hare, Alicai Ward, Vicki Robertson, Joe Simson, Caterina Leone-Manino, Howie Maffucci, John Strazzabosco, Ed Donnelly, Tom Hernandez, Dan Drmacich

Discussion & Decisions:

1. We introduced ourselves to new Coalition member, Caterina Leone-Manino, School #17 Principal.

2. We:

- A. Briefly shared our interview perceptions of Minister Clifford Florence,
- B. That we will be interviewing other candidates, once they are announced, and
- C. May or may not issue endorsements.

2.5 We discussed the issue of RCSD anti-racist professional development and the differences of perception RTA support for it, now knowing that the RTA funded Teacher Center offers voluntary PD on the issue. We also learned from Diane & Caterina that there is much to be said for making the training attractive & voluntary, but concurrently understand the need to somehow make it more intrinsically inviting for those who resist it.

3. We decided to let People's Slate Party organizer, Nate Baldo, know of our decision not to interview City Council and County Legislator candidates for office due to time constraints of our members and our wish to focus our efforts primarily on education policy issues.

4. We discussed our concerns regarding the local State Legislative announcement, interview and selection process for Regents Board vacancies, and decided on the following:

A. We will invite local legislative selection, Ruth Turner, to meet with the Coalition to discuss our RCSD Intervention Recommendations & other education issues. (Does anyone have contact information for Ruth?)

B. Don Pryor & Mark will draft a letter to Harry Bronson regarding our concerns and recommendations for change in the Regents replacement process.

5. We reviewed the agenda for our March 16th meeting with the Commissioner & approved it, subject to change with any new recommendations. See attached proposed agenda process.

6. Bart & Vicki agreed to postpone their activity for racial justice & equity until our next meeting, as long as we give it higher priority on the agenda.

7. We discussed the current RCSD school lunch issues & agreed to take some action, based on Donna's report & other concerns expressed by Coalition members about food quality. Don, Joe,

Chojoy & Donna will investigate possible resources and meet to draft a letter of concern and a proposal for relief to students.

8. Dan announced that D&C Editor Mike Kilian responded to his concern of giving priority space to authors of a charter school op ed piece with no rebuttal from another author. He invited us to submit a response. Dan will ask Shawgi and David Hursh if they will do so.

9. John Boutet has no new news of progress on the busing issue. Dan stated that the Supt. had expressed non-support for it due to budget constraints.

10. We agreed with Ralph that we should focus on the macro-issue of equitable state funding for urban school districts & could start with a briefing from the Empire Justice Center. Dan will make inquiries.

11. We agreed to meet again on Friday, March 19th @ 3:30 PM by Zoom.