

## **2/5/21 Rochester Coalition for Public Education Meeting Minutes**

Attendance: Don Bartalo, Connie Flahive, Tom Hernandez, Don Pryor, Mark Hare, Chojoy Schroeder, Howie Maffucci, Donna Lamura, John Strazzabosco, John Boutet, Vicki Robertson, Lila Alshehri, Laura Smith, Dan Drmacich

### Discussion & Decisions:

1. Laura Smith, a member of the Children's Agenda, presented on her organization that seeks funding increases to the RCSD. She hopes the our Coalition & hers can collaborate on projects for which we have common interests. We plan to invite Laura back for a more in-depth presentation on RCSD funding possibilities.
2. Dan reported that the NYSAPE Co-Director, Jeanette Deuterman has once again contacted Commissioner Rosa for a joint meeting on high-stakes standardized testing, and received a positive response. Ambiguity by the new U.S. Secretary of Education on possible testing variances may be part of the reason for the meeting delay.
3. John Boutet reported that there has been no significant movement on the busing proposal, which would reduce the 1.5 mile requirement for student busing to their school. John will ask Mayor Warren for a status report. Once there is support from the RCSD, meetings with state legislators for support will commence.
4. We agreed to begin scheduling meetings with RCSD BoE candidates. Dan will set up meetings & inform the Coalition of Zoom meeting dates & times.
5. Bart & Vicki led the group in a racial equity activity involving the podcast "Nice White Parents," that raises racism issues of white parents' criteria for choosing schools for their children & implicit bias. We had a meaningful discussion & agreed to continue the activity at our Feb. 19th meeting.

6. Donna reported that the Asbury 1st Methodist Church Education Committee is ready to consider political action on Coalition proposals, as soon as we have something specific.

7. We approved the "Building Relationships" addendum to our "RCSD Intervention Recommendations" statement, with some minor modifications that Dan will make.

8. We discussed the recent incident involving an RPD officer pepper-spraying a 9 year old & agreed with many local organizational recommendations (RASE Policing Committee, is one) that urge more professional development for officers on dealing with people of color and more significant use of mental health personnel vs. police.

9. We discussed the RCSD plan for opening of schools & generally agreed that teachers should be vaccinated before returning to the classroom & that all students should be tested for signs of infection, each morning.

10. We discussed the Farash Foundation initiative to hire an innovative educator to work with parents, students and local organizations to significantly improve the RCSD education for students. Don Pryor stated that he has reliable information that this individual does not have to support charter schools. We agreed to give some thought to who would be good for this position & what the criteria should be. How about using our "RCSD Intervention Recommendations" as a basis for creating the criteria?

11. We agreed to meet again on Friday, February 19th @ 4:00 pm, by Zoom.