

ENGLEWOOD SCHOOLS
Englewood, Colorado
Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education
January 14, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT: MR. SCOTT GORSKY, President
MS. MICHELLE GONZALEZ
MS. VICKI HOWARD
MS. KAREN MILLER.
ABSENT MR. GENE TURNBULL

STAFF PRESENT:

OTHERS PRESENT: Jon Hubbard
Lorie Aksamit
Sheri Andersen
Michelle Watson
Bob Cito
Randy Zila
Patti Holman
Judy Cain
Jenifer Peters
Jessica Smith
David Henderson
Tom Munds
Callan Clark
Michell Ansley
Mandy Braun
Nikki Westfall
Beth Engel
Linda McCaslin
Eva Pasiewicz

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Gorsky, President, called the special meeting of the Board of Education to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Roscoe L. Davidson Administration Building.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Lorie Aksamit Vice-President of the Englewood Educators (EE), read the following resolution signed by the officers of EE, that stated EE would not sign the memorandum of understanding to participate in the Race to the Top program.

Whereas, Englewood Educators (EE) is committed to meaningful, productive, and proven reform efforts that will have a positive impact on the excellence of education offered in the Englewood School District (ESD); and

Whereas, the Race to the Top effort currently underway both nationally and within the state of Colorado is an effort to use funding to convince school districts to participate in activities that politicians at the state and national level describe as reform; and

Whereas, the specific expectations both financial and in activities of the commitments to be made by the Englewood School District and EE are still unknown at the time that such preliminary commitment is to be submitted; and

Whereas, EE has been invited to commit to this process but is not required to do so in order for the Englewood School District to submit a memorandum of understanding to the state; and

Whereas, EE and ESD have previously demonstrated a commitment to collaboration, In recent decisions, there is concern with a lack of communication and collaboration between EE and ESD and a mutual professionalism and respect. EE would like to continue to work on building stronger joint efforts with ESD; and

Whereas, these activities were undertaken without external pressure to commit to such efforts such as the current Race to the Top process;

Be it therefore resolved that, because of the unclear nature of the State Plan and what specifically implementation will require of the participants both financially and in regard to activities, EE cannot be a signatory to the memorandum of understanding required by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Notwithstanding this lack of agreement, EE is still willing and prepared to engage in meaningful discussion with the other District stakeholders about these matters and/or others related to the improvement of excellent education and in keeping "Englewood a Step Ahead."

Jon Hubbard, EE President

Lorie Aksamit, EE Vice-President

Olivia Bucher, EE Secretary

Judy Buch-Cain, EE Treasurer

Mr. McDaniel thanked Ms. Aksamit for reading the EE resolution. Mr. McDaniel stated that he was disappointed that having had good communication and a positive working relationship with EE that they would decide to come to the board meeting to deliver this message without providing him the opportunity to share information and provide input about the Race to the Top program and the memorandum of understanding. Mr. McDaniel added Race to the Top talks about reform that will positively impact kids. It talks about educator capacity and supports for education

IV. ADDITIONS TO AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

V. ACTION / DISCUSSION / INFORMATION ITEM

1. Race to the Top

Mr. McDaniel commented on the resolution EE presented regarding Race to the Top by saying in the resolution EE mentioned its commitment to collaboration however, Mr. McDaniel was not provided the opportunity to share information regarding Race to the Top. This resolution presented tonight, was done so without collaboration. After a year and a half of regular meetings and an openness to discuss important topics including personnel no opportunity was provided to discuss Race to the Top or this resolution before it was presented at this meeting. He further stated Race to the Top is a very important issue to this district and its funding and he was not given the courtesy of being allowed to provide his input. Mr. McDaniel wanted to make this situation clear to the board. He then referred to handouts that he provided to the Board outlining the Race to the Top proposal that states it will create exemplary and sustainable learning

communities to drive dramatic improvements in student outcomes by investing in educator capacity and supports, incentives for collaboration, and opportunities for innovation. Mr. McDaniel emphasized that the memorandum of understanding (MOU) in no way commits the district to the program but simply keeps the district in the conversation. Mr. McDaniel said Nina Lopez, Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Education and Director of the ARRA (stimulus) program, assured that the MOU states the district is interested in the program and allows participation without committing to participate until 90 days after the State has received money from the Federal Government. Mr. McDaniel further emphasized that in the 90-day period when the details of the plan are being hammered out, if Englewood Schools does not feel good about it we can withdraw. This fact was emphasized several times. Mr. McDaniel explained that district administrators have been informed about the Race to the Top program through webinars and meetings. Mr. McDaniel stated the district is looking at a substantial budget shortfall, due to reduced state funding, and this program may provide some help. Mr. McDaniel referred to the handout provided by Ms. Lopez, Points for Participation, that talked about the MOU and included this statement, "Districts sign off on a preliminary scope of work or reform plan and, if Colorado wins a piece of the billion-dollar prize, they have 90 days to complete a final, more detailed scope of work with the state. But if the district and the state cannot agree on that final reform plan, the district can withdraw." Lopez told district officials listening in on three webinars over the past several weeks. The MOU requires the signature of the board and the superintendent while the teachers' union support is asked for but not required. Mr. McDaniel recommended that the district remain in the talks and keep the possibilities open to the district. Ms. Miller asked for clarification on the timeline of money being awarded. Mr. McDaniel explained if the state wins money then Colorado Department of Education will send people to help work out our obligations. Once the plan is in place the 90 days count down will start. Ms. Howard said she has heard rumors that the state may pass legislation in the future that would mandate changes to all districts, based on processes developed from the Race to the Top program. Mr. Gorsky emphasized that when CDE supplies the details the district will decide to participate or not. Mr. Gorsky will look at each reform and evaluate if it is best for students and their learning. Mr. Gorsky stated it is fair for educators and boards of education to question political reform recommendations using knowledge of students and classrooms. Mr. Gorsky was adamant that the district would only participate in the Race to the Top if after careful and thorough study of the developed program it was thought to be best for Englewood Schools.

Ms. Miller moved and Ms. Gonzales seconded to approve Englewood Schools' participation in the Race to the Top program by signing the memorandum of understanding.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Gorsky, Aye
 Ms. Gonzalez, Aye
 Ms. Howard, Aye

Ms. Miller, Aye
 Mr. Turnbull, Aye
 Motion Carried, 5-0

2. Superintendent Resignation

Mr. Gorsky said as sad as he was to have to do so, he would like to move to accept the superintendent's resignation.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Gorsky, Aye

Ms. Miller, Aye

Ms. Gonzalez, Aye

Mr. Turnbull, Aye

Ms. Howard, Aye

Motion Carried, 5-0

3. CASB Search Services

Mr. Bob Cito and Mr. Randy Zila from Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) provided a handout of the CASB services to assist the Board with the superintendent search process. Mr. Cito outlined the process that includes a work session to determine criteria and a timeline along with specifying who would do each task. A focus group meeting will be set to learn from the school community, including staff, parents, students and community members, what strengths and qualities they would like to see in the next superintendent. The board and focus group will also need to state the direction they want to take in the future. Mr. Cito stated that when the position is advertised, questions must be included that respond to the needs of the district and what is currently happening in the schools. CASB will gather the applications, 32 applications were received in 2008 so Mr. Cito would expect a similar number this time. The applications will be screened locally in the same way as the last search. Mr. Cito said the method Englewood used to do paper screenings was so efficient and effective that CASB has incorporated it into their procedures for all searches. At the paper screening candidates will be narrowed to ten and CASB will then do background checks in the candidates community. CASB will next meet with the Board and selected five candidates for interviews. Efforts will be made to keep the process as transparent as possible. Ms. Gonzalez asked if the board determined who was on the focus group and learned that the schools selected people for the focus group and the board selected people for the screening and interview teams. The focus group meeting will be advertised to the district staff and the community. The final choice is the board's decision based on input from the interview teams and their interviews with the candidates. Mr. Gorsky asked if CASB could adjust their fee schedule since we did a search with them just two year ago. Mr. Cito said the fee charged would be approximately \$7,000 plus some expenses, which is the bottom of the fee schedule. Ms. Howard stated that she thought CASB was very helpful during the last search. The Board thanked Mr. Cito and Mr. Zila for coming and providing information on the CASB superintendent search process.

4. Superintendent Search Process

The board consensus was that Mr. Cito had been very helpful during the 2007-08 Superintendent Search. Englewood is comfortable with the process used in the past and several board members said Mr. Cito was a good resource in the past and they would like to continue the relationship with him and CASB because of the close relationship they have with school districts and their dedication to education.

Mr. Turnbull moved and Ms. Miller seconded to use CASB to assist with the superintendent search process.

ROLL CALL:	Mr. Gorsky, Aye	Ms. Miller, Aye
	Ms. Gonzalez, Aye	Mr. Turnbull, Aye
	Ms. Howard, Aye	Motion Carried, 5-0

The board set the first meeting with Mr. Cito for 5:30 p.m. on January 19, 2010 to establish the timeline, talk about objectives and questions for the brochure. Ms. Linda Felling, Secretary to the Board, was directed to send district information to CASB for the superintendent search brochure. Ms. Felling provided the board with information from the 2007 search to use as a guide.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Gorsky adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Scott Gorsky, President
Board of Education

Linda Felling, Secretary to the
Superintendent and Board of Education

Date Approved