



TO: P-12 Education Committee
FROM: Ken Slentz
SUBJECT: Update regarding the Roosevelt Union Free School District and State Oversight Authority

DATE: June 13, 2012

AUTHORIZATION(S):

John B. Slentz
SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board of Regents endorse the Commissioner's continued oversight of the Roosevelt Union Free School District until June 30, 2013?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Quarterly update as per terms of extension of State oversight authority.

Proposed Handling

This issue will come before the P-12 Education Committee for discussion and action at the June 2012 meeting.

Procedural History

In March of 2011, Pursuant to Chapter 33 of the Laws of 2002, the Board of Regents acted to extend Commissioner's oversight of the district until at least June 30, 2012 through the following actions:

- Periodic visitation of the district and continued monitoring of the board of education by the Commissioner and/or his designee(s) with quarterly reports to the Board of Regents;
- Extension of the Superintendent's contract for an additional year in accordance with the terms and conditions therein and relevant provisions of law;
- Monitoring the implementation of Education Law §3012-c (Teacher and Principal evaluation system) and provision of technical assistance as needed;

- Provision of technical assistance through implementation of a School Improvement Grant at the high school.
- Provision of technical assistance in the collection and reporting of district and school level data.
- Continue the fiscal oversight authority, including the appointment of a fiscal administrator, until June 30, 2013. The fiscal administrator will continue to provide progress reports to the Department on a quarterly basis.

The Board of Regents will need to discuss extending the Commissioner's authority to continue oversight of Roosevelt UFSD until June 20, 2013, the date when authority to provide oversight ends.

Analysis

State takeover legislation and impact - Chapter 33 of the Laws of 2002 (later amended by Chapter 72 of the Laws of 2002) provides for State oversight of the Roosevelt Union Free School District by the Board of Regents and Commissioner with the following authority in relation to three major areas:

1. Removal of the board of education and the appointment of an interim board of education by the Board of Regents - the full board was replaced in 2002 and the last member appointed by the Board of Regents has been replaced by an elected board member. There are now five members of the board of education all of whom currently are elected to three year terms.

Assessment: Legislative requirements have been satisfied and the transition to a fully elected board has been completed.

2. Appointment of the Superintendent of Schools and other administrative appointments - the current superintendent is in his 5th year of service and was reappointed by the Commissioner on June 28, 2011. Following such reappointment, the superintendent's contract was extended through June 30, 2012.

Assessment: While the District has established stability in the superintendency and has appointed a high school principal who stakeholders describe as effective, the District still needs to demonstrate significant improvement in student achievement (see the discussion below for a summary of the accountability status of the Roosevelt schools and its achievement data); needs to provide an approvable School Improvement Grant application and needs to continue its progress in accurate data collection and reporting. In light of these continuing challenges related to the District's academic program, the Commissioner and Department staff has determined that the District has not demonstrated sufficient improvement to warrant termination of the Commissioner's oversight of the Superintendent and the District's educational program at this time.

If the Board approves extension of oversight for an additional year, the Superintendent will need to complete his evaluation and the Board will need to complete their evaluation of the Superintendent prior to reappointment by the

Commissioner. These documents will form the basis for the goals that are set for the 2012-13 school year. The Department recommends that the terms of the superintendent's current contract be extended without change through June 30, 2013.

3. Fiscal Oversight - Appointment of a Fiscal Administrator - a new fiscal administrator was appointed on July 1, 2010 and was reappointed on June 28, 2011 to serve until June 30, 2012, based on the scope of duties set forth by law and the Commissioner. The fiscal administrator provides progress reports to the Department on a monthly basis. Further, the Department required and the District has submitted a five-year fiscal plan.

Assessment: The District is projected to end the 2011-12 school year with an unrestricted fund balance of approximately \$1.3 million which equals 1.6 percent of the general fund budget. The district projects a year end fund balance of \$2.4 million on June 30, 2013, which represents 2.8 percent of their projected budget. The district reduced its fund balance from prior years to comply with the requirement limiting unrestricted fund balance to four percent of the general fund budget and to offset a previous reduction in its academic improvement grant. The legislature has allocated \$6 million in Supplemental Aid, in addition to the \$6 million in recurring Academic Improvement Aid they are slated to receive, bringing the total to \$12 million in 2012-13.

District voters went to the polls on May 15 and approved an \$85.45 million budget for 2012-13, an increase of 1.27 percent over the prior year, by a seventy percent margin. The projected tax levy for 2012-13 is 22.45 million, with allowable exclusions, an increase of .99 percent over the prior year. Like many districts, Roosevelt faces the challenge of a limited ability to raise additional local revenues to offset declines in state aid.

While the district has made considerable progress in the management of its fiscal resources, there is an ongoing need for strong fiscal administration and accountability to ensure district stability to meet the challenges of the current and upcoming school years. Staff has concerns regarding the fiscal challenges of the district related to developing a five-year fiscal plan that supports the education plan. While the fiscal management of the district has improved, it is our recommendation to continue the appointment of a fiscal administrator in this last critical transition year, and increase the number of days of service to assist the district in making the transition to full local control. The district's budget has been adjusted to reflect this change.

Background Information

Facilities-related issues

The Roosevelt High School renovation project was approved by the Department in December 2010. Site work and athletic field work was bid on June 7, 2010 and came in under budget at \$2.3 million. The major renovation and addition work was bid on

June 14, 2011, and bids came in approximately \$2.8 million under budget at \$66,932,433.

The district chose to vacate the high school to allow construction to proceed more quickly and avoid safety and health concerns regarding ongoing construction in an occupied facility. High school students were temporarily relocated to the new middle school, and middle school students were relocated to the Ulysses Byas Elementary School (UB). The UB pre-K program stayed at UB. The UB grades 1-3 went to the Centennial Elementary School with the current Centennial students. The UB grades 4-5 went to Washington Rose Elementary with the existing Washington-Rose Students.

Construction started in the summer of 2011, and proceeded smoothly due to the mild winter. The goal is to be completed in phases for occupancy by the start of school in September 2012. If completed on schedule, all schools will revert to their original configuration in September 2012: grades pre-K-5 in the three elementary schools, grades 6-8 in the middle school, and grades 9-12 in the renovated high school.

The track and field complex, football field, baseball and softball fields, and tennis courts are expected to be completed by June 15th of 2012.

The major facility renovations are approximately 70 percent complete with the following specific scheduled completion dates:

- Library / Media Center Addition – December 3, 2012
- New Gym Addition – August 27, 2012
- New Cafeteria / Kitchen Expansion - August 27, 2012
- Interior Renovations - August 27, 2012
- Auditorium Renovations – November 19, 2012
- Infrastructure Renovations/Repairs (mechanical/electrical/plumbing systems) – July 30, 2012

All existing facility renovations are scheduled to be completed for the start of school in September 2012 as well as the new gym, cafeteria and kitchen expansion, while the refurbished auditorium and the new library/media center will be completed just prior to the spring 2013 semester. These areas will be isolated from the occupied portions of the facility during their completion.

Based on a site visit by Department staff on May 17th and 18th, and meetings with the architect and construction manager, the project is currently one month behind schedule. This is a significant obstacle in completing the facility on time for the September semester, only three months away. The Department advised the Superintendent that the district must be prepared to remain in their current relocated configuration if necessary to ensure the project gets completed in a professional and skillful manner with the appropriate quality of construction. A delayed spring occupancy may be preferable to a rushed completion.

The construction manager has asked the prime contractors for a new schedule that must show how the contractors will either apply additional manpower, or work double shifts, or both, in order to make up the lost time in order to complete the project

in time for school opening. As soon as the revised schedules are received (expected on or about June 1) Department staff will re-visit the site and meet with the construction manager to evaluate the schedule.

The project is expected to be completed under budget.

Accountability-related issues

The current accountability status of the Roosevelt Union Free School District is, *District in Need of Improvement* (Year 4), and they are identified for ELA and math. Of the district's elementary schools, two of three schools are in Good Standing and Washington Rose Elementary is in Improvement (Year 1) Comprehensive for ELA. The Roosevelt Middle School is in Corrective Action (Year 1) Comprehensive, identified for ELA and math. Plan needs to be developed to address ELA and math scores.

Roosevelt High School was identified in 2009-10 as Persistently Lowest Achieving for combined high school ELA and math performance and the Department provided the district with an improvement planning grant of \$300,000 1003(a). This grant helped the District develop and implement a plan that resulted in the District receiving a School Implementation Grant 1003(g) for \$1.9 million for this school year. The Department has received and is currently reviewing the Roosevelt Union Free School District School Improvement Grant Update Application.

The Roosevelt Union Free School District plan outlines several initiatives to support dramatic increases in student achievement, including creation of new professional learning communities within the school, a new block schedule that adds two class periods to the school day, as well as a partnership with the Center for Secondary School Redesign who provides professional development and support to school leaders and teachers.

The Department's Office of School Innovation conducted a site visit to the Roosevelt Union Free School District on November 10, 2011 to review the progress of the implementation of the School Improvement Plan and has provided the District with a copy of the report.

The following Recommended Action Plan for SED involvement in district activities for 2012-2013 supports:

1. Hire literacy coaches and full-time Bilingual Parent Coordinator
2. Continue implementation of Common Planning Time
3. Monitor and analyze assessment data to inform instruction
4. Track progress and modify online instructional programs for students enrolled in Read 180 and credit recovery
5. Continue implementation of Collaborative Coaching and Learning model
6. Continue implementation of Response to Intervention model
7. Continue to provide additional interventions to SWD and ELL populations
8. Provide summer programs for students

9. Department staff will visit the district every two months to ensure implementation of the recommended actions during the 2012-13 school-year.

The tables below show the state assessment results for the most current year in which the data is available, as compared to the prior two years.

**Percentage of Students in Roosevelt UFSD
Scoring at or above Level 3 on Grades 3-8
ELA and Math Exams**

(Please note cut scores were changed beginning in the 2009-10 school year)

ELA						
Grade	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	District	State	District	State	District	State
3	76	76	34	55	29	56
4	86	77	34	57	36	57
5	89	82	34	52	35	54
6	72	81	34	54	24	56
7	61	80	27	50	14	48
8	60	69	35	51	17	47
MATH						
Grade	2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	District	State	District	State	District	State
3	90	93	41	59	41	60
4	90	87	42	64	55	67
5	94	88	39	65	50	66
6	58	83	11	61	17	63
7	60	87	17	62	14	65
8	68	80	19	55	29	60

**Percentage of Students in Roosevelt UFSD
Scoring at or above 65 by High School Cohort Year
ELA and Math Exams**

ELA					
2005 Cohort		2006 Cohort		2007 Cohort	
District Percentage	State Percentage	District Percentage	State Percentage	District Percentage	State Percentage
53	77	63	79	70	80
MATH					
2005 Cohort		2005 Cohort		2007 Cohort	
District Percentage	State Percentage	District Percentage	State Percentage	District Percentage	State Percentage
51	77	56	79	74	81

Assessment: While the district has succeeded in stabilizing its finances and rebuilding its aging school buildings the district needs to focus its efforts on implementing the key elements of its action plan noted above.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents endorse the Commissioner's continued oversight of the District until June 30, 2013 through the following actions:

- Periodic visitation of the District and continued monitoring of the board of education by the Commissioner and/or his designee(s) with quarterly reports to the Board of Regents;
- Extension of the Superintendent's contract for an additional year in accordance with the terms and conditions therein and relevant provisions of law;
- Monitoring the implementation of Education Law §3012-c (Teacher and Principal evaluation system) and provision of technical assistance as needed;
- Provision of technical assistance in the completion of and, if approved, implementation of a 2nd year School Improvement Grant at the high school.;
- Provision of technical assistance in the collection and reporting of district and school level data;
- Continue the fiscal oversight authority, including the appointment of a fiscal administrator, until June 30, 2013. The fiscal administrator will continue to provide progress reports to the Department on a quarterly basis.