

Facilitator Pat Body

Attendees: Gerry Scott, John Meyer, Caroline West, Mary Silibrici, Daniel Kolinski, Tom Buckel, Judy Edwards, Katie Scott, Sheila Dekew, Sarah McIvain, Captain Keith Muhammad, Kim Morrell, Richard & Kathie Baldwin, Jevon L. Works, Captain Shoff, Mike Behnke

Presentation: Syracuse City School Superintendent Jaime Alicea

Jaime Began teaching in the district in 1983, then pursued administration at Fowler. He has taught in both elementary and high school. Most of work experience in near Westside and Southside as Principle at Seymour and Fowler. For the future of education, everyone must be accountable; teachers, politicians, parents, etc. Kids in district speak 81 different languages; 18% of students are ENL (English new language). City schools need to be able to support kids and parents to be successful. There are kids coming to high school with no school experience. 21% of kids need special services. For the first time in ten years, the district has reached 61% graduation rate, went from 48%. Gold medal initiatives, last year received a grant for pre-k graduation. Almost 1800 kids in pre-k program including some in community centers and churches. The school system is working with refugees in the Northside to get the kids involved. The goal is to get all the kids reading on level by 2nd grade. There is a lot of work going on to support teachers with classroom management, as we are still under attorney general audit for suspending a lot of African American kids and kids with special needs. The district is improving support and making people accountable; if kids are out on the street they will not be successful students. Councilors from the county are working with the schools. The school Board made a commitment to add social workers to the high schools. The board this year just approved 10 social workers out in the community doing home visits, want kids in school learning. New CTE programs in the district: culinary, cyber security, automotive skills, construction, law enforcement, emergency medical, etc. Working with *Centerstate* to know what the jobs will be in Central NY area, so kids are ready for the job market in this area.

Q. They have a choice to go to different high schools in the city, correct?

A. Programs are specific to schools in the city. Cybersecurity is at Fowler, welding is at Corcoran; different program choices in all the high schools, kids can apply to the high school with their program choice.

Q. When kids switch gears at 16, what happens?

A. We make sure to do an evaluation, basic courses in 9th grade and if they want to go to another program they can go to another program. IF a kid doesn't want to continue in a program, there are still traditional regents programs in the schools.

Q. IS there an entrance or aptitude test?

A. There is a test PSAT, given in 10th grade, how are we going to be doing that at the 8th grade level. Boces offers programs at 11th and 12th, we want kids early so they begin in 9th grade.

Pat Body mentioned that at 8th grade kids go to CTE fair, all kids in high school man the booths and talk about their programs. Then they demonstrate some of things they learn in their program. Last year it was at PSLA at Fowler.

Want to make sure that every kid going through CTE program come out with credentials/certification. The students can also graduate with a regents diploma.

Q. Mentioned 3 things: English as a new language, sensed frustration with state and federal mandates, if you are in a room with politicians to hold them accountable to the teenagers who are not up.

A. Mandates are coming from both state and federal government without any funding to educate the kids with ENL. Asking the state for the support that we need now, when the kids are out of the streets and not in jail.

Q. What's the middle ground that might work?

A. we need to make sure that a kid coming with no credits, need to make sure we can put a kid in a technical program so that they can learn some skills so that they can come out with a high school certificate. Kids coming in at age 18-19, it can be frustrating that they cannot earn enough credits to graduate by age 21.

Q. The role of the teacher in the city school is incredibly demanding and challenging. What is the district doing to bring people into the administrative jobs?

A. Having difficulties finding teachers that represent the students, going to open program for home grown teachers; students working in Oswego and other schools to train how to deal with instruction, deal with administration, etc.

Q. Lemoyne gave enough money for 18 teachers, is that program started yet?

A. Haven't heard that from Lemoyne, but have a teacher program with Syracuse University. Have to make a commitment that they work with City schools for at least 3 years, and move into the city.

Q. The old central tech, charter school building new school.

A. Central tech is great building but needs about 62 million to renovate, it's very difficult because if you don't have kids in building you don't get aid from the state. There are some people interested in the building, mayor has spoken with Jaime.

Q. One of the issues with consensus has been school consolidation, how would you design a county wide school district?

A. It is ok for a city kid to come to FM, then we can have that discussion. That are some areas that we can work together, but want to make sure that our kids get the same services and resources are treated like every kid in the county.

Q. how can we break up the concentrated poverty?

A. If you look at Baltimore county, when it consolidated, it left their city out. The school district in Baltimore is separate, it's not county. Half of the programs listed in the brochure are not available outside the city. Kids need opportunities to compete.

Q. Could you talk about the schools in this area and talk about their progress?

A. We have been doing a lot of work in schools on Northside, just opened Montessori school on Northside. Grant, offering personalized blended learning. You get labeled you get money, you make progress you get punished, funding taken away. Board has to go find the money to make up the money that was lost. Working with Catholic Charities to offer after school programs for the kids. Webster school, over 600 kids in school making progress. Henninger High school is it on receivership, has increased graduation rate by 5%, opened programs in the medical field. Elmcrest interested in buying building on the Northside.

Q. Northside is split between Henninger and Fowler, is Fowler going to get a stadium?

A. Working with architect; improving athletic fields now. Begin construction in the Fall or early next year. Will not be an enclosed stadium, but it will be quality. Will have concession stand, will be like Liverpool and will be a turf field.

Q. Did you see that Say yes has made positive influence in getting kids to college.

A. Thankful for Say Yes coming to Syracuse. Conversations with Say Yes again, but want parents to make a commitment to say yes in kindergarten. Parents have to take responsibility to get kids to school every day. Received 20 million dollars from state to continue the scholarships. Say Yes paid for tuition in all the SUNY schools, now the government is providing tuition to all SUNY schools, so Say Yes needs to help with room and board or something else.

Q. Will you have a trade school; people need skilled machinist.

A. Again, working with Centerstate to see what jobs are needed in the area.

Q. Companies can teach people to run the machines but you can't teach people to think how to run the machines, need to spend money on getting kids on how to think.

A. Blended learning is teaching kids learn how to think and work with others. Blended learning is using technology to teach kids. Kids get lecture, work with other students to do research, make a powerpoint presentation. If kid needs extra help, they could get help from another student or go to another room to work with teacher one on one.

Q. When you say that you are working with Centerstate to determine jobs, what is that interaction between school district and Centerstate?

A. Ongoing communication with companies; people from Mackney, O'Brien Gere, Syracuse University, Crouse. Advisory group that meets 4 times a year to figure out job opportunities in Central NY. Charter schools are competition. We need to believe in public education. We need to continue to work with parents, changed term from parent engagement to family engagement as some kids do not live with their parents.

Q. Most of the schools were probably built before WWII

A. Yes, going to be doing renovations in 14 of the buildings. Fowler will get a new stadium. Huntington, Ed Smith, Grant and Frasier. Then all the high schools, Elms, Bellevue. Not enough money to do everything in Blodgett, work inside but not whole building.

Call Jaime Alicea and he will let you in the building to see what is going on. Each building is a single point of entry for security purposes.

Comment: When you renovate buildings think about the exterior design and making people feel welcome.

Q. What is your number?

A. Not in the office most of the time, do a lot of unannounced visits in the building. 315-435-4161. We are a customer service; we work for the public.

Q. Do you see businesses partnering with the school at all?

A. We do, 3 years ago we had the school business partnership. Carrier still comes to Seymour and provides activities with the schools. Now, we make sure that each one of the new programs has a business partner. Looking for mentors if you are looking for something to do on Sundays.

Update from City-Wide TNT Board: Strategic Planning Proposal

Pat Body updated the group on the TNT City-wide Strategic Planning upcoming meeting on April 27th that will occur at ITC. The first meeting had over 50 people. The last meeting will be June 1st. Pat informed the group of the TNT history timeline and asked the group to put memories on it.

Announcements

- 1) Mike Behnke with Syracuse Parks Conservancy announced that they offer the community individual grants in the amount of \$1,000. TNT cannot sponsor the grants; you can use a church or neighborhood watch as a fiscal sponsor. Parks Conservancy has a memorandum of understanding to help the Parks department in the city to help the parks.
- 2) Friends of the Butternut Community Police Center are having their Annual Fundraiser at Atilio's, May 17th from 6pm – 9pm. Raffles, silent auction, great time to connect with different groups involved on the Northside. Each year we pick someone we honor, this year will be the Chief of Police.
- 3) Fundraiser Butternut Community Police Center, asking for donations for gently used shoes; get so much money per pound.
- 4) Board of Elections need more election inspectors. When you vote, someone must man the vote Democrat and republican. You have to go into a class to do this. Every year you must take this class. 5:30am till 9:30pm; For one day you get \$125, with a break. If interested, you have to call the Board of Elections.

Ideas for topics to cover?

- 1) Housing development on Butternut St, someone in City Planning come talk about developments that we should know about on the Northside.
- 2) Belen Cordon with NBD, Loveland Technology
- 3) Candidates Forum (probably in September or October)