

WORK SESSION OF THE GREENWICH BOARD OF EDUCATION

DATE: July 19, 2007, 6:30 p.m.

PLACE: Havemeyer Building

PRESENT:

Board: Mrs. Colleen Giambo, Chairman
Mrs. Leslie Moriarty, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Nancy Weissler, Secretary
Mr. Steven B. Anderson
Mr. Michael C. Bodson
Dr. Susan S. Ellis
Ms. Virginia L. Gwynn
Mr. William G. Kelly

Administration:

Dr. Betty J. Sternberg, Superintendent of Schools

Other: Mrs. Julie Faryniarz, PTA Council President; Mr. Thomas Mooney, Shipman & Goodwin; Mr. Dennis Cheesebrow, Teamwork International

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Giambo, Chairman at 6:30 p.m.

1. Legal Implications of the U.S. Supreme Court Ruling for the Rise Task Force

Mr. Thomas Mooney addressed the legal implications of the recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling for Connecticut's racial balance statute and for the Rise Task Force: He began by noting that in Connecticut, education is a responsibility of the state and that the General Assembly, in turn, has responsibility for implementing and enforcing procedures and requirements. These requirements are, in turn, to be carried out by local and regional Boards of Education. He noted that in the Supreme Court case, the

Seattle and Louisville school districts had used race as a key determinant in their procedures for integrating their schools. Plaintiffs had challenged these procedures under the Equal Protection Amendment. The Court applies strict scrutiny in determining when race can be used for classification; it determined that the defendants had not made a compelling case and it found for the plaintiffs.

Mr. Mooney stated that he believes that Connecticut's racial balance law is constitutional after taking into account the recent Supreme Court ruling. He noted that in his recent ruling, Chief Justice Roberts affirmed the legality of Massachusetts' 1968 racial balance law. Mr. Mooney noted, however, that school districts will have to be mindful of not using racial classifications of individuals as a factor in determining enrollment eligibility. However, districts may instead use surrogates such as those based on geography or socio-economic status to achieve compliance with the State statute. He also indicated that it will be a number of years before the full ramifications of the Supreme Court decision are known.

The Board reviewed Mrs. Moriarty's draft Statement of Consultation on the Charge to the Superintendent for the RISE Project and made suggested changes, which Mrs. Moriarty will incorporate.

It was decided that there was insufficient time at the meeting to address the revised draft of Mission, Vision, and Values.

Upon motion duly made Mr. Anderson and seconded by Mrs. Weissler, the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Nancy Weissler
Secretary