

(ATTACHMENT 1) ACTION ON A REQUEST TO ESTABLISH A SEPARATE SCHOOL FOR GRADES 6-8 OF THE RUFUS KING INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

June 25]

203

[2009

* * * * *

(Item 8) Action on a Request to Open a Middle-Years Program, Beginning with Grade 6, in the Fall of 2010, to be Associated with Rufus King International Baccalaureate High School at McNair School

Background

1. Rufus King High School for the College Bound rigorously prepares students for higher education and has done so since the 1978-79 school year. Rufus King currently serves students in grades 9-12. Since the establishment of entrance requirements in 1997-98, Rufus King has maintained a yearly wait list. Rufus King High School for the College Bound offers one of the oldest and most successful International Baccalaureate programs in North America.

2. Rufus King offers both the International Baccalaureate (IB) Full Diploma and certificate programs. Students in grades 11 and 12 can participate in one or more IB classes. In order to qualify for an IB Diploma, students participate in an academically rigorous program which includes writing an original essay, completing 150 hours of creativity, action or service, and acquiring 24 points or more on six subject area exams. Currently, in grades 9 and 10, pre-diploma students take a sequence of courses to help them prepare for the two-year IB Diploma program.

3. This year 99 students are Full Diploma candidates, but representation in this group does not mirror the student population. Only 14.9% (30 students) of African American students are Full Diploma seniors, while 49% (42 students) of White students are Full Diploma seniors. Other students of color who represent smaller percentages of the total population fare somewhat better in this area.

4. This achievement lag is also demonstrated in other school data, including Grade Point Average (GPA). African American students maintained the lowest GPA at all grade levels during the first semester mark period. The cumulative first semester GPA for African American students at Rufus King High School for the College Bound was 30% lower than that of White students for the same time period. This same pattern was noted for cumulative GPA, as published in the school's Report Card for the 2007-2008 school year.

5. Since membership in National Honor Society, an organization that recognizes and encourages academic achievement, is by invitation based on GPA, African American students are not well represented in this group either. During the 2008-2009 school year, 95 African American students in grades 10, 11, and 12, representing under 15% of the total number of African American students enrolled, were invited to apply to become part of this organization. Of this number, 33 students applied and 11 were accepted. For the same school year, 83 White students, representing almost 38% of the total number of White students enrolled, in grades 10, 11 and 12, were invited to apply to the National Honor Society. Of this number 47 students applied and 24 were accepted.

6. During the past four school years, 2004-2005 to 2007-2008, ACT composite scores for African American students at Rufus King have increased steadily from 20.2 to 22.6. Furthermore, the number of African American students participating in ACT testing has increased from 200 to 221. In spite of this

progress, ACT composite scores for African American students continue to lag 1.8 points below the average composite score at Rufus King High School and 5.9 points below that of White Rufus King High School students.

7. Although Rufus King High School students outperform the district on the WKCE, achievement gaps continue to exist for African American and special education students. For example, during the current school year, 85% of Rufus King students enrolled for the full academic year were proficient or advanced in reading, while only 79% of African American students and 27% of special education students enrolled for the full academic year were proficient in reading on the WKCE. For all subject areas, please see the chart below.

Percent of Grade-10 Students Scoring Proficient/Advanced on the 2008-2009 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) (Full-Academic-Year Students)					
	Reading	Mathematics	Language Arts	Social Studies	Science
Native American	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Asian	96%	89%	85%	93%	86%
Black	79%	58%	72%	73%	59%
Hispanic	94%	80%	97%	93%	86%
White	94%	90%	95%	95%	89%
Students with Disabilities	27%	6%	24%	27%	15%

8. The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (MYP) is designed to provide a balanced education that will equip young people to function in today's changing world. The curriculum is represented by eight academic areas, including arts, mathematics, humanities, technology, physical education, language I, language II, and science which surround five areas of interaction, including health and social education, environments, human ingenuity, community and service, and approaches to learning. Three fundamental concepts, intercultural awareness, holistic learning, and communication, support and strengthen all areas of the curriculum.

Administration's Analysis

9. Based on Rufus King International Baccalaureate High School's proven success with the IB high school program, and in order to provide students on the north side with the opportunity for an IB Middle Years Program (MYP) as is currently available for students on the south side, the school community is proceeding with the rigorous application process with the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO).

10. The International Baccalaureate program considers a Middle Years Program (MYP) to include grades 6-10. Currently only 11th and 12th grade students attending Rufus King are enrolled in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. Should the Rufus King application for an IB Middle Years Program be successful, the administration proposes to continue to serve 9th and 10th grade students in the current Rufus King location and serve IB students in grades 6 through 8 at a separate location.

11. The location proposed for the Rufus King Middle School is the current McNair Elementary School. The Board has recommended replacing the current McNair K8 program with a middle school.

12. Authorization for an IB MYP can be requested as soon as students at all grade levels are seated. The application requirements from IBO, including specific curriculum at each grade level, will be instituted as each grade level expansion occurs.

13. During the 2009-2010 school year, Rufus King will recruit appropriate staff so that the special training required for IB teachers can commence immediately in the summer of 2010, prior to the start of the 2010-2011 school year.

14. Plans will be made to implement the IB Middle Years Program (MYP), associated with Rufus King High School for the College Bound, one grade per school year beginning in the 2010-2011 school year with grade six. Grade seven will be added in 2011-2012, and grade 8 in 2012-2013. Details relative to the operational aspects of the new program will be brought to the Board at a future date.

15. Students satisfactorily completing eighth grade at the new middle school will be eligible for Rufus King High School for the College Bound.

Strategic Plan Compatibility Statement

16. The Administration's recommendation supports the MPS Strategic Plan Goal 1: Students meet and exceed Wisconsin academic standards and graduate prepared for higher education, careers and citizenship.

Statute, Administrative Policy, or Board Rules Statement

17. This item is consistent with Administrative Policy 5.01: Facilities Development.

Fiscal Impact Statement

18. This item does not authorize expenditures in the FY10 school year. During FY10 the district and the Rufus King community will engage in appropriate planning activities that are anticipated to be absorbed within the existing school budget. There may be future costs associated with converting the McNair site to a middle school. The construction fund contains funding for school moves and relocations that is expected to be available for this purpose. Costs associated with IB educational programming will be funded through the middle school's per pupil allocation.

Implementation and Assessment Plan

19. Upon approval of the Board, the school will begin the application process with IBO, follow through on each of the phases, consideration, candidate, and authorization. They will recruit and train staff members and recruit students. District support will be available to assist with placement of staff and assignment of students. District staff will also facilitate discussions with administrative staff from another MYP district program. To help close the achievement gap at Rufus King High School, district staff will support the school community in adoption and implementation of instructional strategies that are consistent with IB philosophies.

Committee's Recommendation

Your Committee recommends that:

1. the Board authorize the opening of a Middle Years Program at McNair School for grades 6-8 to be associated with Rufus King International Baccalaureate High School, beginning with grade 6 in the 2010-2011 school year;
2. Rufus King High School for the College Bound fully implement the Middle Years Program to include grades 9 and 10 at Rufus King High School for the College Bound, with no interruption to students wishing to pursue the IB opportunity from grades 6-10;
3. the staff and administration of Rufus King High School for the College Bound immediately take steps to address the achievement gap;
4. the school proceed with the intent to create a single 6-12 school, with no entrance requirements to be set for grades 6-8; and
5. the Administration report back to this community and the Board no later than the January 2010 meeting cycle.

Director Blewett moved that

1. the Board authorize the opening of a Middle Years Program at the McNair School for grades 6-8 to be an extension of Rufus King International Baccalaureate High School, beginning with grade 6 in the 2010-2011 school year;
2. Rufus King High School for the College Bound fully implement the Middle Years Program to include grades 9 and 10 at Rufus King High School for the College Bound, with no interruption to students wishing to pursue the IB opportunity from grades 6-10;
3. the staff and administration of Rufus King High School for the College Bound continue to take steps to address the achievement gap;
4. the school proceed with the intent to create a single split campus model 6-12 school, with an entrance portfolio consisting of points for grades, attendance, reading and math placement tests, and extra-curricular involvement in school or non-school related activities;
5. the Administration report back to this community and the Board no later than the January 2010 meeting cycle.

Director Falk moved a substitute, to approve the Committee's recommendation, deleting in number 4 the words "with no entrance requirements to be set for grades 6-8," and replacing that and adding "and to revisit entrance requirements at a later date after the Board has had an opportunity to discuss IB requirements."

The substitute motion was adopted, the vote being as follows:

Ayes—Directors Falk, Miller, Petersons, Spence, Woodward and President Bonds—6.

Noes—Directors Blewett, Thompson and Voeltner—3.

* * * * *