



Board of School Directors Committee Meetings Minutes Wednesday, January 9, 2019

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Members present: Nicholas Braccio, William Brong, Janet Flisak, Matt Holliday, Ken Keith, Thomas Kwiatkowski, Stephen Nelson, Donna Scheuren, Courtney Barbieri

Others present: John Franzen, Frank Gallagher, Catherine Heller, Christopher Hey, Katie Kennedy-Reilly, Jeremy Miller, Fran Masin-Moyer, Katie McCoy, Jeff Pammer, Bill Stone, Geri Wilkocz and Megan Zweiback.

1. Education-Personnel Committee

1.1 Middle School Schedule Update

Mr. Kwiatkowski called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M.

As presented in September, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Dr. Katie Kennedy-Reilly commented that this presentation continues to unpack and detail the proposed revisions to the Middle School Schedule. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reviewed the presentation and highlighted items that support high-performing middle schools; including academic excellence, and student supports which are developmentally responsive and socially equitable. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that in order to achieve this high level of performance, high-performing schools establish norms, structures and organizational support to sustain growth towards excellence.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reviewed the developmental considerations, the organizational supports, and the curriculum and instructional themes that are guiding the middle school update. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly highlighted the focused items for SASD and reviewed the advantages of teaming which groups teachers and students with a two person team encouraged. Teaming facilitates interdisciplinary learning and allows for common planning time. The proposed schedule will include longer blocks of time with less transition. Student support services will include a counseling and advisory period along with individualized support. Curriculum and instruction will remain challenging and exploratory as well as cross-curricular. There will be early exposure to STEM curricula and reading and writing will be applied and practiced in all classes. Instruction will be student centered with collaborative projects, capitalizing on prior knowledge.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reviewed several points of data from Future Ready PA Index, School Performance Profile, and historic PSSA results by grade. A baseline Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) report was also presented for Math and Reading in grades five, six, seven and eight. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly commented that this was the first collection of MAP progress and a majority of our students scored at or above the national norm. This same report will be presented after students take the test again. The advantage of MAP is it supports and complements curriculum based measures and allows for immediate action for students and teachers unlike PSSA results. Also noted was the specificity of Future Ready PA Index which illustrates improvement areas not previously reflected on the School Performance Profile (SPP).

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly closed the presentation noting that middle school focus remains on reinforcing the knowledge learned in elementary school and creating the bridge to high school expectations.

The Committee had questions on the Future Ready PA Index results and the current ESL and ELA supports in each middle school. A question was asked about supports for students with a GIEP. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly responded that the MAP baseline will be a strong result indicator for student support. A question was asked how our assessment scores are impacted by ESL enrollment changes and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly indicated that WIDA (World-class Instruction Design & Assessment) testing is specifically geared to determine and monitor the language level of students entering the school system. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly also indicated that MAP results will assist with those supports.

Mr Keith asked about milestone expectations and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly responded that baseline data from MAP will assist in benchmarking results. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly also noted that observational work by principals will assess student engagement, learning etc.

Mrs. Barbieri asked about ELA proficiency and its relationship to 1:1. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted the implementation of 1:1 was to use technology in a meaningful and purposeful way and we have seen increase and improvement in writing skills because of the ease of keyboarding and device access. Mr. Holliday praised the proposed schedule for its strong transitional approach on both entry and departure from middle school. Mr. Braccio asked about what is driving the change to middle school education and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly responded that data gathered from many surrounding districts and nationwide has been in support of the proposed changes.

1.2 Middle School STEM Elective Update

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly explained that the STEM course offering is a two part elective which will be made available to 8th grade students. The two components that will make up the one credit course include Pre-Engineering (a course which currently exists in the high school Program of Studies) and a new course titled Introduction to Coding. The Introduction to Coding course will be formally introduced at a Spring Curriculum Council meeting. These individual courses, when blended, will create a new Middle School Pathway leading to High School Engineering and Computer Programming classes.

Mr. Kwiatkowski inquired about the connection of our curriculum developments to NMTCC and Dr. Gallagher responded that it is aligned and collaboration exists.

Mr. Kwiatkowski adjourned the Education-Personnel Meeting at 7:46 P.M.

2. Finance Committee

2.1 Accept the Single Audit Report for 2017-2018

Mrs. Scheuren called the meeting to order at 7:51 P.M.

Dr. Gallagher announced the successful completion of the Single Audit Report and Mr. Stone noted that the Board was being asked to take action for acceptance on January 24, 2019.

Mr. Holliday inquired about an internal service fund surplus recommendation and Mr. Stone indicated that the recommendation will be forthcoming. Mr. Holliday reviewed some of the comments in the audit report noting some of the favorable key comments.

Mrs. Flisak inquired about the fund balance policy.

The Board agreed to move forward for action.

2.2 Approve Athletic Training Services Contract

Dr. Gallagher commented that the current athletic training contract with NovaCare is up for renewal. He noted that a very favorable offer had been received from Grand View Health through the a recent RFP process.

Mr. Stone explained the two components of the Grand View Health proposal, including a trainer at no cost to the school district and a \$100K stipend to the school district.

Mr. Stone made a recommendation to approve a five year agreement.

Mr. Holliday praised the agreement and Mr. Keith inquired about others offers received in the RFP process.

Mr. Brong expressed concerns about consistency of service and Mr. Kwiatkowski inquired about trainer certifications. Mr. Stone responded that the district expectation is for two fully certified trainers. Ms. Barbieri asked if other schools using the same service model had reported success and Dr. Gallagher responded that all recommendations have been positive. Mrs. Scheuren expressed gratitude to Grand View Health for their competitive and generous proposal.

The Committee agreed to move forward for action.

2.3 Whitebirch Financial Planning

Mr. Stone introduced Senior Managing Consultant Christopher Bamber from PFM Asset Management, who gave an overview of the Whitebirch software. Mr. Bamber noted that the software was owned and developed by PFM and explained the program as a long range financial planning tool. He highlighted the software capabilities which would allow several budget scenarios to be evaluated.

Dr. Gallagher and Mr. Stone commented that the tool would assist in directing a budget conversation and is a best practice. Mrs. Scheuren asked about the utilization of the product and Mr. Bamber replied that it has been in existence for about two years, mainly utilized by higher ed and had been recently modified for use in the K-12 school environment.

Dr. Gallagher noted that it would replace the Forecast 5 software currently in use by the district. Mrs. Scheuren asked specifically how it assists in budget development and Mr. Stone said that it allows for changes to assumptions and provides immediate results. Mr. Bamber also noted that it has a credit rating input module that can gauge a credit rating goal based upon proposed financial decisions made by the school district.

The Committee asked if the software was being used to prepare the 2019-2010 budget and the response was yes.

2.4 Approve 2019-2020 Preliminary Budget

Dr. Gallagher announced that this agenda item was in line with the Act 1 timeline and the budget development calendar.

Mr. Stone reviewed a Preliminary Budget presentation noting that the Preliminary Budget reflects a deficit in the amount of \$6,191,030.

Mr. Stone noted that the PSERS employer contribution rate had been certified at 34.29%, a reduction from the initial projection of 34.79%.

Mr. Stone reviewed the preliminary revenue side of the budget and stated a total of \$129,502,273. Those revenue assumptions are based upon the Act 1 Index, a slight decline in major local revenue, flattening of basic and special ed subsidies and no increase to student fees. The overall percentage of revenue change from the 2018-19 budget is an increase of 1.8%.

On the expenditure side of the budget, total expenditures were stated as \$135,693.303. Expenditure assumptions included additional teaching and support staff, a rate increase to health insurance, and full funding of device and projector replacements. Other key factors include Charter School tuition, an increase to the transportation contract and a modest increase to special education budget. The expenditure change from the 2018-19 budget is a 6.6% increase.

Mr. Keith asked Mr. Stone to explain the Act 1 Timeline as it relates to the Preliminary Budget. Mrs. Scheuren expressed concern that the Board not take exceptions to the Act 1 index, and Mr. Keith agreed.

The Committee asked that a resolution be prepared stating that the Board would not take exceptions, and therefore would not propose a tax increase that would exceed the Act 1 Index (2.3%) for the 2019-2020 budget year.

Mrs. Scheuren adjourned the Finance Committee Meeting at 9:35 P.M.

3. Operations Committee

3.1 Five-Year Capital Project Plan Update and Proposed 2019 Summer Projects

Mr. Brong called the Operations Committee Meeting to order at 9:38 P.M.

Dr. Gallagher announced the presentation of the District Capital Plan.

Supervisor of Operations, Mr. Ball, highlighted the key projects across the district that are included in the plan. Mr. Braccio asked about the timing of the proposed high school stadium turf replacement. Mr. Ball responded that working with design and consulting service ELA Sport, the scheduled bid process and award has work scheduled to begin in mid May with a completion in August. Mr. Kwiatkowski reiterated his concern about turf replacement and the overall life of synthetic turf.

Mr. Brong commented on the departure of Mr. Stone and his diligent service to the school district.

Mr. Brong adjourned the Operations Committee Meeting at 10:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Renai M. Cardillo
Acting Board Secretary