



Board of School Directors Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Generated by Renai Cardillo on Friday, February 14, 2020

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

Members absent: Thomas Kwiatkowski

Others present: Frank Ball, Lisa Ball, Tamara Callahan, John Franzen, Frank Gallagher, Jon Graf, Sue Hadfield, Laura Heineck, Christopher Hey, Katie Kennedy-Reilly, Katie McCoy, Fran Masin-Moyer, Jeff Pammer, Brian Pawling, Dave Purnell, and Geri Wilkocz.

1. Education-Personnel Committee

1.1 Future Ready PA Index - Elementary

Ms. Barbieri called the E-P meeting to order at 6:34 P.M.

Dr. Gallagher commented that this is an annual presentation, reporting on student achievement.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly announced that The Future Ready PA Index is a collection of school progress measures related to school and student success, compiled and provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The Index includes a range of assessment, on-track, and readiness indicators, to more accurately report student learning, growth, and success in the classroom and beyond. Future Ready PA Index contains the most recent data available in the 2018-2019 school year.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that this evening would focus on a review of elementary school data. A slide presentation was shown which reflected data highlighting achievement and growth in each school by subject matters; ELA, Math & Algebra, and Science. Color coding was used on the slides to show goal meeting, achieving yearly goal and red indicating the goal had not yet been met. The presentation showed percentages of proficiency, statewide growth and statewide year 2030 goals.

Elementary principals were in attendance and each spoke about the Towards the Future initiatives within their buildings. Each school has different activities that all promote academic achievement, social emotional learning, social responsibility, responsive classroom, and leadership skills.

Several principals spoke on customized learning and small group instruction. The importance of morning meeting as well as afternoon meeting, supporting student inclusion was discussed for many classrooms. A piloted "soft landing" for morning arrival was also mentioned. Adult mentorships and student-led conferencing were highlighted as programs that are experiencing success with teachers, students and families.

A brief discussion occurred about the algorithm that is used to calculate the Science scores. Mr. Nelson commented that utilizing a partial ELA and Math score does not seem to support actual data. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly responded that there is an expectation that this calculation will be changed.

The final slide in the presentation was a comparison of SASD elementary schools to other schools in Montgomery County and to other schools statewide.

Dr. Gallagher thanked the principals and acknowledged Mr. Masin-Moyer for his comprehensive data review.

Ms. Barbieri praised parent nights in the schools, which she said are most informative. Mr. Holliday praised the schools for their individuality, and also their collective ideals. Mr. Holliday also mentioned the IXL on-line Math program which he witnessed and said how impressed he was by its function to support teachers and students. Mr. Braccio praised the report as did Mr. Nelson who echoed the comments of others. Mr. Nelson praised the mindfulness and focus approach in the classroom which he said is also applicable in the work world.

Mrs. Scheuren asked about the 2030 goals and Dr. Kennedy-Reilly said that those goals were determined by the State. PSSA assessment rigor and core standards were increased and therefore the goal was increased over time, to meet it. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted that the rigor was not lowered. Mrs. Scheuren also asked about the Salford Hills scores and how their practices might be shared to other schools.

A brief discussion occurred about ELL (English Language Learners) students and their development of conversational language into academic language and their results in PSSA testing. Dr. Gallagher said that Title monies assist the school district in supporting ELL's goals.

Mrs. Flisak asked about the evaluation process and the calculation of results. Dr. Kennedy-Reilly said that the PVASS side of the testing does take each individual students growth and achievement. Mr. Keith praised the principals responsibilities and results and acknowledged the individual challenges that they face in each of their respective schools.

Mr. Brong thanked the principals for their efforts and for hosting the Board members for their school visits.

1.2 Middle School Schedule - Update

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly reviewed a slide showing the changes that had been made to the middle school (grades 6, 7, and 8) schedule at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. The original purpose of the change was to increase instructional time in the core content subject areas. The revised schedule has also allowed for a Focus class every day which offers opportunities for Guidance and Advisory lessons. The new schedule also created a STEM course and a World Language offering.

Indian Crest Middle School Principal, Mrs. McCoy spoke about the success of the new schedule since implementation. She noted that the transition from 5th to 6th grade has been much smoother and the two person teams supported positive relationship growth between teachers and students. She also noted a decrease in discipline referrals in 6th grade.

Indian Valley Middle School Principal, Mr. Pammer commented on the increased time for staff to plan, review student data and the ability to implement those needs directly into instructional time. Mr. Pammer also noted a renewed flow of traffic within the building, since everyone is no longer moving at the same time.

A short video was presented highlighting the Middle School schedule. It showcased the classroom flexibility, increased lab time, and Focus block. Teachers, guidance counselors and student testimonies were also included in the video.

1.3 Grant Applications

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly spoke about the environmental grant that had been applied for. If awarded, it would support the high school science and horticultural curriculum that aligns with the greenhouse. A decision is expected in early April.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly noted \$40K was received in the Second Step grant which will support curriculum and materials for social emotional learning.

Dr. Kennedy-Reilly also noted that the district had applied for the PA Smart Grant in the amount of \$485K. This grant would support computer science curriculum in grades K-12. A decision is expected the end of February.

Ms. Barbieri adjourned the Education-Personnel Committee Meeting at 8:12 P.M.

2. Finance Committee

2.1 2020-21 Budget Update

Mrs. Scheuren called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 8:20 P.M.

Dr. Gallagher indicated that this an update and no action is required by the Committee.

Director of Business Affairs Mr. Pawling noted that this presentation will be an update on the preliminary budget preparation as it currently exists.

The result of a PSERS subsidy decrease due to a rate adjustment (projected 34.77% to 34.51% actual) and updated assessment values through January, put the preliminary budget at a deficit of (\$2.7M).

Mr. Pawling noted other potential adjustments including State subsidies for both basic education and special education. Staff retirements, the North Montco Technical Career Center final budget, department reviews, local revenue projections, federal budgets, Act 44 safety and security grants and health care costs. Mr. Pawling commented that health care costs are currently trending on target.

Mr. Pawling reviewed a slide that highlighted the content from Governor Wolf's Budget Address from February 4, 2020. The proposed budget increases the (BEF) Basic Education Funding by \$100M. The SASD increase would be \$190,850 or a 1.9% increase. The (SEF) Special Education Funding was proposed at \$25M - an increase to SASD of \$68,036 or a 2.1% increase. These are tentative numbers and could change based on final allocations run through each line items funding formula.

There was zero increase for CTC and Transportation and zero for new funding for PlanCon. The (RTL) Ready To Learn is flat-funded and remains its own line item.

The Governor's proposed Charter School Reform establishes a flat statewide cyber charter tuition rate of \$9,500. It would also apply a special education funding formula recommendation to charter schools to report actual costs in a three tier system, that would apply weighting to regular ed cost. The tuition calculation would be based on actual expenditures vs. budgeted. The proposal expands and codifies deductions from tuition calculation - federal funds, payments to charters, grants.

Mr. Pawling reviewed a slide that showed the impact of the Charter School Reform to SASD based upon the proposed assumptions. This would result in a savings to the SASD in the amount of \$311K.

In other legislation, Senate Bill 779 would move the primary election day in presidential election years from the fourth Tuesday in April to the third Tuesday in March. As a result Act 1 budget deadlines would change for 2024.

A brief discussion occurred about the calculation of the BEF and SEF tuition rates for charter schools and the need for accountability to be addressed by the State of PA.

Dr. Gallagher spoke about the creation of the advocacy group LEARN (Leaders for Educational Accountability and Reform Network). The purpose of the group made up of Superintendents, is to obtain a place at the table when legislation is being created that impacts Charter School Reform. Dr. Gallagher indicated that State Legislators want to hear directly from Superintendents who are experiencing challenges in their budgets because of existing Charter School Laws. Dr. Gallagher also spoke about his invitation to be at the Governor's Budget Address and the interaction that is occurring because of the LEARN advocacy.

Dr. Gallagher also mentioned that the P.S.B.A. Advocacy Day in Harrisburg is scheduled for March 23rd.

2.2 Approve Montgomery County Intermediate Unit Budget

Mr Pawling noted this was an annual approval item and the Board is required to vote on the I.U. budgets for the Office of Professional Learning, Office of Community & Government Relations, and Office of Technology Services for the upcoming year.

A brief discussion occurred about the M.C.I.U. budget and Mrs. Flisak noted that the M.C.I.U. Director would be leaving his position. Mrs. Scheuren reminded that the participating districts need to express their concern on the oversight of the former I.U. property and its use. Dr. Gallagher suggested an increase to their Community Relations Department which supports a lot of the legislative advocacy work on behalf of the Superintendent's. A discussion also occurred about the salaries of the M.C.I.U. employees.

The Committee agreed to move forward for Board Action on February 27, 2020.

Mr. Scheuren adjourned the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:59 P.M.

3. Operations Committee

3.1 Comprehensive Facilities Study discussion

Mr. Brong called the Operations Committee Meeting to order at 9:00 P.M.

Mr. Brong announced that there were two agenda items.

Mr. Pawling gave a brief overview of the proposed Comprehensive Facilities Study. The study would be done by an architectural firm that would do a full study, to include internal spaces, external spaces, fields, kitchens, and security. A report would be provided at the end of the study which the district could use as a road map for 5-10 years.

Mr. Keith said the equipment study would be limited to operational (boilers, etc.) devices and would not include technology and or office equipment. Mrs. Flisak asked about the specifics of the kitchen facilities and Mr. Pawling responded that it would be limited to the best use of space, not individual pieces of kitchen equipment. Mr. Pawling also indicated that the study has a Not to Exceed amount.

Mr. Keith added that this is simply a report, not a guarantee of work for the architect. Mr. Pawling also indicated that it will be a very collaborative process with our own building facilities managers.

Mr. Braccio and Mr. Nelson acknowledged its usefulness.

Mrs. Scheuren noted that none of the letters of recommendation contained in the proposal, had dates on them. Mr. Pawling said he did make reference calls and received positive responses. Mrs. Scheuren also expressed concerns on the scope of the work.

The Committee agreed to move forward for Board action.

3.2 Agreement with Rampart Construction for EMC Elementary Construction Project

Mr. Pawling said the agreement is necessary to close out the E.M. Crouthamel project. Specific details have been previously discussed in the Executive Session.

Mrs. Flisak inquired about the Hold Harmless language and its protection for the school district. Mr. Pawling indicated that the subcontractor clause was protection for the school district as it itemizes payments to the subcontractors.

The Committee agreed to move to Board action.

Mr. Brong adjourned the Operations Committee Meeting at 9:23 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Brian R. Pawling
Director of Business Affairs/Board Secretary