

WORK SESSION MINUTES

A Work Session of the Springfield School District No. 19 Board of Education was held on April 26, 2021. In order to comply with the Governor's executive orders, the Board conducted this meeting by video conference only. The public was invited to watch or listen to the Board Work Session via Zoom Webinar or Zoom Phone. Information for participating was shared with the public on the district website and news media outlets.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Board Chair Zach Bessett called the Springfield Board of Education virtual work session to order at 5:02 p.m.

Attendance

Board Members attending the Zoom webinar included Board Chair Zach Bessett, Board Vice Chair Naomi Raven, Dr. Emilio Hernandez, and Todd Mann. Lisa Barrager was excused due to illness.

District staff and community members identified included Superintendent Todd Hamilton, David Collins, Brett Yancey, Mindy LeRoux, Brian Megert, Jonathan Gault, Kellie, Taylor Madden, Whitney McKinley, Jeff Michna, Charles Jett, Anthony Reed, Dustin Reese, Maria Smith, Jen McCulley, Summer Merrifield, Judy Bowden, Vincent Adams from Oregon School Boards Association, Emma Routley from The Chronicle and Jayson Hayden, minutes recorder. There was also one community member who attended using Zoom Phone, so their name was not available.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Zach Bessett called for a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION: Vice Chair Raven moved and Mr. Mann seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

Chair Bessett called for a roll call vote. Chair Bessett asked each board member to indicate if they supported the motion to approve the Agenda as presented: Ms. Raven – yes, Dr. Hernandez – yes, Mr. Mann – yes and Chair Bessett – yes.

Motion passed, 4:0.

3. OREGON SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION TRAINING

Chair Bessett welcomed back Vincent Adams from Oregon School Boards Association. Mr. Adams began the third installment of the scholarship training program. He began with a recap of previous trainings in September, January, and February and outlined the components of equity and racial justice.

Mr. Adams asked the Board to share their reasons for attending this training and doing equity work. Board members shared the following:

- Provide safe, supportive spaces for all students.
- Importance of extracurricular activities and connecting with others.
- Returning to normal safely and successfully.
- Sympathy for young people of color and in poverty fearing the police. The reason for these trainings must be constantly changing to keep up with the changing times.

- Helping those with mental health and other issues.
- Situations were always changing and there was always room for personal growth.
- Be able to better understand how the definition of racism had changed over time and come to a common working definition.
- Importance of focusing on both individual students and also the adults on the staff and in community.

Mr. Adams facilitated a conversation about structural racism in which the following points were shared:

- Racism was inherent from the start. For example, only white men were able to vote and the treatment of Native Americans.
- Structural racism was passed down through the generations.
- These conversations present learning opportunities.
- Individual responsibility was key to engaging in these conversations and facilitating change.
- Racism has become institutionalized.

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Adams had asked the Board to review other districts' policies for Educational Equity and compare them to the policy which Springfield Public Schools uses. He commended the Board and District for hiring an Equity and Inclusion coordinator who would start on July 1st.

The Board took a recess from 6:35 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.

Following the break, Mr. Adams and the Board engaged in a discussion about which parts of the various policies seemed important to include in an Educational Equity policy and which ones needed more clarity or additional definitions.

Other items they pointed out included:

- Avoiding the unnecessary use of negative terminology and themes in policy.
- Clearly underline the differences between equity of opportunity and equity of outcomes.
- Clearly define how the policy should be implemented and a process for accountability.
- Language should be very specific in order to achieve the desired outcome.
- A student's role and responsibilities should not be left out of the policy.
- An equity lens should be used when writing or amending policy.

Following the discussion, Mr. Adams commended the Board on the work they had accomplished and felt the discussions had been very informative and helpful. The Board responded that they felt the discussion had revealed areas where the board could continue to strive to make improvements in educational equity. They also expressed appreciation to their fellow Board members for the vulnerability that is required to engage in these types of conversations.

4. NEXT MEETING

The next Board meeting will be held on Monday, May 10, 2021 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

5. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chair Bessett adjourned the work session at 7:43 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Jayson Hayden)