

WORK SESSION MINUTES

A Work Session of the Springfield School District No. 19 Board of Education was held on September 27, 2021. 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 Naomi called the Springfield Board of Education virtual work session to order at 5:30 p.m.

Attendance

Board Members attending the Zoom webinar included Board Chair Naomi Raven, Board Vice Chair Emilio Hernandez, Jonathan Light, Kelly Mason and Todd Mann.

District staff and community members identified included Superintendent Todd Hamilton, David Collins, Brett Yancey, Dustin Reese, Vincent Adams from Oregon School Boards Association, Judy Bowden, Colleen Hunter, Joan Bolls, Laura Beyerlin, Samantha Alcantar, Nick Wing, Steve from CALC, Joyce Smith-Johnson, June Fothergill, Mindy LeRoux, Whitney McKinley, Jeff Michna, Brian Megert, Jonathan Gault, Jen McCulley and Jayson Hayden, minutes recorder.

2. OREGON SCHOOL BOARD ASSOCIATION TRAINING

Chair Raven welcomed back Vincent Adams from Oregon School Boards Association. Mr. Adams continued to share a training on the *Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members*.

Mr. Adams gave an overview of the types of meetings beginning with regular meeting schedule which is planned at the beginning of the year and approved during the organizational meeting and require a reasonable notice to the public. These are typically business meetings where the bulk of the approval work would be done. He then explained special meetings, noting that these are sometimes in response to operational issues that come up during the year and require at least a 24-hour notice. Mr. Adams said that emergency meetings were for emergent issues such as the wildfires experienced last year. He noted that justification for not giving a 24hr notice should be included in the minutes. Executive session is a closed meeting with very narrow reasons for going into a closed session. Mr. Adams explained that virtually all business the Board did was done in the public eye, except in the case of student expulsion. Mr. Adams explained work sessions and noted that this was one type of meeting about which he received many questions. He said there was no legal specification for work sessions and explained they were simply certain meetings where they indicated to the public that the Board was focusing attention on a limited range of topics and not making any decisions or taking public comment. He added that work sessions were often just special meetings with a different label. Mr. Adams explained that the operational meeting was done at the beginning of the year to set the calendar.

Mr. Adams moved on to discussing meeting procedures, noting key outcomes they wanted to get from meetings. He explained the six principles of meetings, beginning with the idea that the majority has the right to decide and the minority has the right to be heard. He explained that they did this by using a two-times round robin plan, giving each person an opportunity to speak and be heard, and making sure no one spoke a second time until everyone else had been heard. Mr. Adams noted that this helped facilitate those who were less verbose or uncomfortable speaking out. He added that using speaking and voting charts for each agenda item helped keep track of who was speaking and when, and a place to record their votes.

Mr. Adams explained principle number three where members have the right to information to make decisions. He noted there were times when enough information wasn't available and said that Board members could raise a point of information if they felt a piece of information was missing which would be critical to a decision. Chair Raven said she would appreciate if they used that term to help her know which direction the conversation was going. Mr. Adams added if the information was not available at the time then the topic could be tabled for a future meeting.

Mr. Adams mentioned principle four emphasizing that courtesy and respect were required to be able to model that behavior for everyone. He explained some out of order remarks, such as interrupting other members or the public when speaking, criticizing past actions of the board, personal remarks about colleagues, criticizing another member's motives, or inflammatory language. He noted that the Board was responsible for holding each other accountable for these things and explained that the way to do this during a meeting was raising a point of order.

Mr. Adams explained the principle number four where all members have equal rights, privileges, and obligations, and noted that it was the responsibility of everyone to uphold this.

Mr. Adams shared the final principle where members have the right to an efficient meeting. He said that most Boards conduct their meetings using Robert's Rules to ensure sticking to a systematic process. He noted that tangential side conversations could be avoided by using point of order. Mr. Adams explained that a consent agenda could be used to bundle up multiple minor or routine actions and speed up a meeting. He added that the use of unanimous consent was also a great tool if there was an item that wasn't likely to have objections.

Mr. Adams mentioned the order of business, noting that the Board had moved their action items forward and the reports toward the end of the meeting compared to Robert's Rules, but he noted that this wasn't necessarily right or wrong, just a stylistic decision. He suggested that it may be useful to have reports before action items as reports may inform those decisions.

Chair Raven explained that they were very thoughtful about the order of business in their meetings and that their two-meeting process meant the reports were information gathering and no decisions were made based on them. She added that they had moved students' reports to the beginning of the meeting in case the student representatives couldn't attend the whole meeting. She asked Mr. Hamilton to review their thought process behind this order and he explained that action items were typically unfinished business that the Board had already discussed and consent agenda were typically regular items that did not require discussion. Mr. Hamilton said that the general intent behind having action items and discussion up front was to take advantage of the freshness and focus of Board members at the beginning of the meeting.

Mr. Adams explained that consent agenda was a tool to speed up meetings by dealing with routine or noncontroversial items including staffing or reports that could be reviewed offline. He highlighted that items in the consent agenda could be pulled out and addressed as individual items, if desired. Chair Raven said she had done a lot of research on this process and shared how she would like to facilitate this part of meetings. She explained that prior to moving into the consent agenda she planned to ask if any member would like to pull an item from the consent agenda and noted that it only took a single member to pull an item. If a member wanted to pull an item from the consent agenda, she would thank them and ask for a motion to approve the agenda minus the item in question, then after the motion they would come back to the member who requested an item pulled to hear their reasons for pulling the item. Then after a brief discussion to bring clarity as to why the item was removed, she would call for a separate motion and vote on that item. Mr. Mann thought this was a helpful idea and Ms. Mason agreed, noting that they did not know if a single member could pull a consent agenda item in a prior meeting. Mr. Light said it was fine with him and Dr. Hernandez wanted to make sure they had clear reasons for pulling an item. Chair Raven

explained some reasons why an item would be pulled including pulling an item if a director knew they planned to vote no on it, if they needed further discussion or information on the item, or if the director might have a conflict of interest. Mr. Light added another reason to pull an item could be to offer transparency to the community. Dr. Hernandez added that the community needed to know the reasons behind their decisions and Mr. Light agreed.

Mr. Adams reviewed the topic of board communication and noted that even Board members with no prior civic engagement typically joined other organizations or clubs. He said this was crucial as it provided the Board with relevant information from the community. He noted these reports should be kept brief and larger reports should be shared offline. Mr. Light said he was unable to find any information about what could be discussed or a time limit. Mr. Adams shared that in his own experience conversations should be reserved for work sessions in order to save meeting time and noted that regular meetings were more suited for making decisions.

Chair Raven asked the Board to consider how efficiency, focus, and the role of the board related to Board Communication. She thought Board Communication was an opportunity for members to clarify what their work was. Mr. Mann was in agreement. Mr. Light said he was more concerned with the effectiveness of the district, than he was with meeting efficiency which might get in the way. Ms. Mason said she did not have the same context as others as a new member, but said this gave her a lot to think about. Dr. Hernandez thought they were heading in the right direction and stressed they had to make sure the entire Board was on the same page.

Chair Raven asked that the Board review their Board and Superintendent Operating Agreements before the next work session and said she would appreciate feedback from the Board members.

Mr. Adams began discussing public comment and noted that the law required that the public has access to the work of the Board and added that public participation was not required, but it was recommended. He stressed that public comment was important but should not be the only means for engaging with the community. He said that public comment could be added to any meeting and could even be the sole purpose for a work session. Mr. Adams suggested having a sign-up process to keep track of who was speaking and where they were from. He said it was important to set expectations of what kind of remarks were allowable and the time limit for commenters.

Mr. Adams explained that HB2560, which will take effect on January 1, 2022, had been passed by the legislature in the last session. This meant that School Boards had to provide virtual access to meetings whenever practical. He noted that access could be provided over the phone or livestreamed. Chair Raven asked what the role of the Board was in this process and Mr. Adams said he was not aware of any policy changes that would be related to this. Dr. Hernandez shared the concern that virtual access to meetings could lead to more potential harassment from abusive members of the public. Mr. Adams noted that the Board set the standard for out of order or threatening remarks and said that virtual meetings allowed them more control, such as the ability to simply mute a person making aggressive remarks. Mr. Light asked how they could screen callers who weren't part of the community. Mr. Adams explained that all citizens had equal right to speak at board meetings, even if they didn't live in the community.

Mr. Adams shared slides showing the parameters for the different types of ways the Board receives comment including email, physical letters, and audio or video recordings sent in by the public. He recommended reviewing these comments before the meeting instead of using meeting time to view them.

Mr. Adams explained the emergent topic of student representatives. He recommended the Board have a very robust conversation about this and noted that some Boards have entire student advisory boards which

give input to the Board. Chair Raven shared that the sample student representative policy was sent out and she thought that the current system in place was great and hoped to put it into policy.

Mr. Mann thought it would be a good practice to have a break in meetings that lasted over an hour. He suggested providing coffee and refreshments in the Board room and making the lighting and decoration of the room more inviting. Mr. Mann suggested that they set some parameters for board presentations to make them more efficient in presenting specific information to the Board.

Mr. Light explained that OSBA had created a document regarding communication strategies for public engagement and noted that public meetings could be intimidating to the public.

Ms. Mason appreciated Mr. Adams presentation and liked the suggestion about using students' art in the Board room.

3. DIANE EFFSEAF MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM WRAP UP

Chair Raven shared that they were not able to cover this topic with Mr. Adams, but said she would get in touch with him for input. She explained that this program was about a book study the board participated in last year. The Board chose White Fragility as the basis for this work regarding equity and inclusivity for all students. At the conclusion of the book study, the Board received a \$2500 check to be used as a scholarships for district students.

4. NEXT MEETING

The next Board meeting will be held on Monday, October 11, 2021 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

5. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Chair Raven adjourned the work session at 7:11 p.m.

(Minutes recorded by Jayson Hayden)