

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625
Saint Paul, Minnesota**

**COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING
360 Colborne Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102**

**February 7, 2023
4:30 p.m.**

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:33 p.m. by Vice Chair Kopp.

2. ROLL CALL

Board of Education: J. Kopp, J. Vue, H. Henderson, J. Foster, U. Ward., Z. Ellis, C. Allen
Chief Jackie Turner (in place of Superintendent Gothard)

Staff: K. Thao, C. Long, A. Collins, N. Paez, Y. Vang, C. Anderson,
S. Schmidt de Carranza, S. Dahlke, T. Parent. B. Natala, K. Kimani, E.
Wacker, T. Sager, A. Kunz, M. Lochungvu, L. Olson, J. Danielson, N.
Páez, A. Anderson, C. Green, D. Abrams, J. Vollmer,, M. Langworthy

Community: L. Bolton, J. Verges, M. Wall

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA

MOTION: Director Kopp moved approval of the Order of the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Foster. It passed by acclaim.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. PREK-12 MATH CURRICULUM REVIEW AND ADOPTION

Chief Turner welcomed Executive Director Anderson and the team to share the adoption process for the next curriculum for math in SPPS.

The presentation was grounded in the quote "Access to high-quality grade-level instruction is the pathway to equity." Key terms were reviewed, including curriculum, instructional model, and materials. Within the Why portion of the presentation, details on the Nation's Report Card were provided, as well as SPPS MCA math data, and the alignment of this review and adoption to the Effective and Culturally Responsive Instruction strategic focus area of SPPS Achieves. The background information on the current math curriculum in SPPS was also provided.

Within the How portion of the presentation, information was shared on the timeline of September 2023 through August 2023 and process. The six guiding principles were reviewed, including Teaching and Learning, Access and Equity, Curriculum, Tools and Technology, Assessment, and Professionalism. Effective teaching practices for mathematics was also reviewed, as well as teacher input comments.

The materials that were reviewed were also shown, as well as K-12 final selections. EdReports data was also included for the final selections, which shows alignment and usability. Engagement session data and feedback was also presented, as well as communications. Next steps include review at the upcoming board meetings, with the final selection for elementary, middle school and high school to be included in the March 21 Regular Meeting.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Foster requested information on the data from the MCA scores, and knowing that the number of students taking the test has dropped, and the impacts of that on the math curriculum process. Response: The data pulled in relation to the process was all students who took the test. There has been lower engagement in students taking the test, but there is a large majority who do participate. We can also send more information about individual schools, and the number of students who took the test throughout the years.
- Has there been significant data for factoring in the decrease? Response: We don't believe so - the data is showing that 25% of students were proficient, therefore, 75% of students were not, which is not acceptable to us.
- Director Allen requested information on the culturally relevant instruction in the models in elementary school especially, because if our students can engage and love math in elementary, that will carry them through their education. Response: Details were provided on the two models for elementary - one specifically was very engaging with the teacher and hands-on, with language supports for EL learners, and pieces built in around Zaretta Hammond's Ready for Rigor framework, and how students learn with Ignite, Chunk, Chew, and Review, and tapping into our cultural assets in learning opportunities. Once vendor also engaged in concept teaching. The digital aspects of the different vendors was also shared, including supports for students and opportunities for different needs. Many of the tasks are problem-based and allow the ability to enter from a cultural perspective and background. We also need a vendor committed to culturally relevant instruction and equity, and through that lens, of having the curriculum vetted and to look for biases and give feedback for revisions, and to ensure the stories and problems in the curriculum are inclusive of all students. Math is different than literacy, and it is about how to create opportunities for students to engage in mathematical concepts and support our students to be successful.
- Are the vendors local or national? Response: They are national, and one in particular has a staff member who is local and a local warehouse.
- Director Foster noted that in looking at curriculum that is culturally relevant, we need to be also looking at our partners and vendors to hold the same values.
- Director Ellis noted that there is one final vendor across all grade levels, and the impact of that on the flow between different grade levels. Response: That is being considered, and that math instruction at the elementary level is also being taught by teachers who also teach literacy, writing, social studies, and morning meetings all combined, and their needs may be different. Typically in middle and high school, their license is for math specifically, and the usability may be different. There are options for every level to take their expertise and the lens of their day and apply it to this. We will continue to update the Board with the selection process.

- Director Ellis requested information on updates to the curriculum, and how those will be rolled-out, especially in thinking about the long-term use and timeline under this process occurs again in the future. Response: A lot of the materials are digital, so when updates are made, they are sent across all platforms of use. When curriculum is digital and a vendor makes an update, students have the access to the most updated materials. Everybody and all teacher have access, and teachers can access all grade level materials, which is a positive aspect to be able to see what has been covered in previous or will be covered in future years; as well as our MLL and SPED teachers being able to also access.
- Director Vue requested information on the impacts of the shift to digital learning during the pandemic on the MCA scores. Response: The engagement level at home was tricky because there may have been a lot going on in the home, and the teacher would keep going and not know if students were listening or participating in the lesson. As we came back to school, there were masks and fear about social distancing, and materials and manipulatives were not being shared. With the 20-year old curriculum, many of the books are out of print and unavailable with no updates available. The best practices have shifted over the past 20 years, and the real difference is in materials, that will engage teachers and help our students. It is about engagement, pedagogy, and cultural responsiveness to make the differences for our students.
- Director Vue noted that the data from students who are Asian was missing, and Administration responded that that data will be sent and available.
- Director Vue also requested information on the EdReports, and what districts they serve and the timeline for implementation of curriculum. Response: There is further data available by clicking on each image within the presentation, and we will also investigate further because the claim for EdReports is that the curriculum has been implemented. Because they are national companies have been implemented in districts across the country, once we determine finalists, we will also be investigating their use w/ the Council of the Great City Schools.
 - Director Ellis followed-up on this point that this report does not state about student success, only that it was sold.
- Director Henderson requested information on the guardrails that we could use without MCA scores, and the plan for that. Response: Both of the elementary companies have a data-rich base, which includes a screener and dashboards for the teacher. One has a digital intervention tool, including guidance for large group and small group instruction, and to see where students may need more practice and lessons. There is a digital interface to align with the classroom instruction. Digital tools also include a common misconception identifier. These tools will be tied to the curriculum, which is different from current practice. The data dashboard will also be helpful tool, and teachers will be able to coordinate small groups based on data and the needs of the students.
- Director Henderson also noted hopes that we will learn more about the MLL spectrum of these vendors and what that could look like in a future presentation.
- Director Ellis mentioned the multiple formats and digital aspects, and concerns of our youngest learners and screen time, and the other components to engage with students on materials. Response: One of the key terms is framework and materials to support, and through EdReports, with the alignment, MN is not a common core state, and once we make a decision and have materials and new math standards, there will be work to make it aligned with MN standards. Pedagogy in the classroom is important. In culturally relevant instruction and Ready for Rigor, the classroom needs to be a safe place and engaging for students. The framework needs to be hands-on and conceptual, and link to the procedural. Students needs to be able to show the concept, build it, link and draw to the algorithm about how math works. Teachers also will focus on professional development, especially elementary teachers who need to teach math and show a passion for it, and engage with the PD and changing mindsets around math instruction.

- Director Ellis noted that information about how this has been working in other districts would be helpful. She also noted the low engagement from middle school teachers, and other opportunities to engage.
- Director Kopp requested information on components for families to help support their child in math. Response: Every vendor does have a family component, where instruction and support is included in multiple languages, or is Google Translate compatible, with friendly videos for students and families.
- Director Ward requested further information on the materials and curriculum and the translations available. Response: All curriculum offers English or Spanish materials, which will be very beneficial for immersion programs. There are certain pieces that feature a glossary and interactive toggle for different languages and translations. There are supports built in for Google Translate as well.

6. POLICY UPDATE - Updates to Policy 716.00 Advertising in the Schools

The presentation included the rationale for the changes, the proposed changes (including current language, proposed new language, and the rationale for the changes) to the policy including Title, Purpose Statement, Permission and General Requirements, examples, and next steps. The policy draft with revisions can also be found in the BoardBook.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Allen requested information on information that could be included in the consent agenda for the Board to know when a logo is being used. Response: With the proposed revision, there would be procedural changes, and one of the changes is that we would include language in the contract.
 - Director Allen then noted it would be helpful to inform the Board about our logo use and partnerships so they can be prepared for seeing the logo and SPPS in community. General Counsel Long noted that it would not necessarily be a consent agenda item as through the policy, the consent is already given, and the delegating authority would be to the Superintendent. The time may not exist for the Board to approve the use through the consent agenda at a regular board meeting, and if approving after it has already been used, the approval would be after the fact. Director Allen noted that the Board should be notified about the logo being used in community or with partnerships. It was noted that the policy includes standards, and if the proposed use would be detrimental to the educational mission or reputation of the District, it would be the basis for denying permission. Ms. Wacker also noted that when a partner is gifting to the District, we can recognize them, with the example as the Amazon gift to Battle Creek Elementary.
 - Director Kopp noted that a manner by which to alert the Board, either a notification by the Superintendent or staff, would be helpful.
- Director Vue noted questions on the enforceability of this policy, and Director Kopp requested information on what happens as the contracts expire and how we manage that. Response: There are standard terms of contracts, including that when the contract ends or expires, the provisions included also end. If through the contract, we are allowing use of our name and logo, when the contract ends, that provision would also end.

7. STUDENT OUTCOMES FOCUSED GOVERNANCE: LOGIC MODEL REVIEW

Chair Vue and Vice Chair Kopp then shared the SOFG logic model, which is necessary because of the funding of this professional development, and in alignment with other programs funded by ARP, and

includes the demonstration to the community of the rationale, impact, and those served. This logic model represents where we are right now, and if we move forward, the logic model will evolve to be more complex.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Ward requested information on individual meetings scheduled with board members with Council of the Great City Schools representatives.
- He also noted questions on the rationale for keeping community engagement short. Director Vue noted that the availability of board members will determine the length of time, and the Council recommends a “short and sweet” approach.
- Director Ward noted the availability of board members in April and their availability for community engagement.
- Director Henderson requested information on the length of conversations in community engagement.
- Director Kopp noted that in the recommended framework, CGCS recommends standard questions as best practice and 2 board members in each session, to listen to community members and hold the richness of conversation. She believes they also recommended 60-90 minutes - but there are pieces we can adapt and that can be included in the coaching sessions, as this is Board-led.

8. STUDENT OUTCOMES FOCUSED GOVERNANCE: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT BRAINSTORM SESSION

Vice Chair Kopp then noted that the other purpose of today’s discussion is to identify people and community groups that the Board would like to engage in this work.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Ellis noted that in thinking about engagement with students, and where and how is the best place to meet with them without upending their day, or coming to the Board after a long day at school. We’ll need to look at the best way to do that.
- Director Ward had questions on the intentions of this engagement, and is the goal to build relationships with stakeholders through this and future years, or is it a one-time engagement? Response: We have heard we want to do more engagement, and the catalyst for doing more and regular interactions. It will not be setting the goals and then saying goodbye - it will be about checking in, and refreshing.
- Director Ward noted it will be important to have publicly advertised events, and if we will be focusing on groups, or targeting them? Response: It will be a mix. There will be some that will be open, and others will be targeted because we know not everyone may be comfortable participating. We will want to talk with our PACs.
 - Director Ellis noted that PACs have been meeting, and they have very clear ideas on what we should be doing or not doing, and those will be good conversations.
- Director Henderson noted she would be interested in engaging with former students, especially those who maybe graduated during the pandemic, or the past 5-7 years, and where they are at and what would have been helpful for them.
- Director Ward noted that meeting with our labor groups will be helpful, and to be as inclusive as possible. The district councils will also be interested in helping to bring folks together.
- Director Ellis noted that Parks and Rec spaces may be a helpful place to engage as our students are spending time there after school.

- Director Ward noted the idea to hold at least one event in each area of SPPS, and have options for online engagement and in-person as well. In southeast Saint Paul, the Conway Rec Center is a possibility.
- Director Henderson agreed that scheduling engagement sessions in every corner of the city would be helpful, especially the West Side, and Neighborhood House may be a great place to host a session, and would include current and future families, and former students.
- Director Foster noted that engagement occurs on multiple levels, and this is moving forward as the Board's role and knowing opportunities, and we need to model this ongoing work, and accessibility will be especially important - with interpreters, childcare, food, transportation (Title 1 funds for busing perhaps)
- We also need to be very intentional, and there are often marginalized groups, and how we are talking with community members at our mosques and synagogues, as well as in communities who typically aren't engaged, and we need to meet families, hear what they want in this district and be intentional.
- Director Allen noted that one demographic in particular to engage is our low-income and housing challenged folks, especially those who may be working 2-3 jobs, or busy finding housing, and may not be available for community engagement. A lot of times it the students in the buildings who need extra help and support, and we'll need that perspective. We need to challenge our brains on how to get to folks who typically don't have a voice that is heard.
- Setting guardrails for the long-term will also be important to incorporate.
- Halls and big spaces are an option, as well as smaller group conversations and a 15-minute call to folks, and working with Project Reach.
- Director Kopp noted that the framework can be flexible, but the questions asked should be similar. While there can be differences, there should be some harmony across events to draw feedback and for consistency, as well as tailored to the environment. The engagement may look different, but the questions asked should have some consistency.
- A board member noted checking into large school events that are currently planned and we could tie into and share that space.
- Director Henderson noted that we also need to be mindful of the district of people in power, and to create safe spaces for families, and a facilitator may be beneficial in some spaces to lead the conversations.
 - Experiences of engagement in Cincinnati were noted, and the 40 engagement sessions; some were facilitated and some were not. We will need to be strategic and look at the costs as well.
- Director Ward noted if the Board is able to agree to a set of questions to use at events, and to make a form available online and in-person for the Board to receive from families. Director Kopp noted that it may depend on timing or comfort, or other reasons that folks may not want to be in that space and the form would be helpful.
- It was noted that if a community organization or church, mosque or synagogue thinks this would be helpful for their community members to let the Board know and we can plan an event at their location or add onto an already-planned event.
- It was noted that the Board enjoys being in community in different ways, and that is a strength of the Board, and we can lean into that to determine our engagement strategy. We can also meet folks in parks or playgrounds.
- Director Vue raised the question that with 30,000 students, and 4,000 staff, and about twice as many parents and caregivers to students - at what point have we met enough engagement? We should look at other districts' work as well. Chief Turner noted that in previous engagement, we have aimed to reach 10%, but we can also talk with CGCS to get information about the work of other districts as well.
- Director Vue noted that language supports will be important in this work.

- Director Ward noted that the Sanneh Foundation may be helpful, and they operate from the Conway Rec Center, which is usually busy, and they have a strong relationship with our Somali community members.
- Director Allen mentioned there are a lot of community partners and great places, and to send a survey to students or staff and ask if they are willing to host a space for us.
- Director Kopp noted looking into district spaces, and non-district spaces.
- Director Ward mentioned our public libraries as an option, as they offer many different services to students.
- Director Ellis noted that our Office of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships may be able to help with connectings, including PACs.
- Director Ward noted a general thought in discussing this topic, and the type of engagement this will be - we have flexibility in this work, and it is about the Board listening, and the community educating us, and their feedback can lead to change. We need to be clear that things people bring to the table can be used in real ways.
 - Director Kopp noted that in the past community engagement may not have felt meaningful to everyone, and it will be important to describe what we are doing and where their information provided may lead, and to be sure we are not overpromising that everything said is a goal for the Board, but to synthesize the information and make it meaningful.
- Director Ellis also noted past experience in community engagement, and we need to follow-up and let them know where that information landed, and continuing the conversation. We need to respect the voices and time of our community members and follow-up with them.
- Director Foster noted this is delineating the Board's work in community in order to give direction to the Superintendent and the team for the overall vision and goals of the district. It is about re-engaging in different ways and a system of ongoing engagement to hold us accountable to the community who elected us to do so.
- Director Ward raised the question if this would be ongoing engagement, and if this round would be centered to create goals and guardrails, and if next year, it may be a different topic focused on this, and thinking about making this sustainable. It is not helpful to bring folks together and seek feedback if their information will not lead us to a decision that they have discretion over.
- Director Allen noted another demographic that it will be important to engage - the hyperly disenfranchised students who may be in hallways of middle and high schools and downtown on Fifth and Minnesota.
- Director Kopp reminded everyone that this is Board-led work and we will compile and organize the data, and will be brought back to the Board through email or future conversations. She encouraged her colleagues to share in their expertise of setting the environments to be meaningful conversations, and to continue to think about where we are noticing folks may be missing and in what spaces. This will be a heavy lift for the Board, and it will work if we are all invested and working closely with one another. This is potentially transformational work.
- It was also mentioned that PTAs and PTOs may be helpful to engage, as well as the note that not every school has these groups.
- Director Ellis noted our Focus Beyond community and our schools with students at different levels and being intentional about engagement. The families served by these programs may not have opportunities to share their experiences, and we need to be intentional about reaching out to them, as well as families and students at Journeys, Gordon Parks, and AGAPE.
- We will need to be intentional about the plan for engagement, because it will be easy to list the areas, partners, and organizations to engage, but we will also need to look at geography of the spaces, who is included, who is not included, and prioritize.

- Director Foster asked if there are spaces that maybe hold annual meetings where parents and families may already be and the Board could add onto these events, where parents are speaking their voices. Chief Turner noted that there are, and we plan to look at the work of other districts as well, and align to the current work already underway, including upcoming conversations about the strategic plan, and there may be a natural tie-in. This is a Board-led initiative and work, and Administration will be available to help and support.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Director Kopp moved to adjourn the meeting. Director Ellis and Director Allen seconded the motion. It passed by acclaim.

The meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

For clarity and to facilitate research, these minutes reflect the order of the original Agenda and not necessarily the time during the meeting the items were discussed.

Prepared and submitted by:
Sarah Dahlke
Assistant Clerk, St. Paul Public Schools Board of Education