

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

**BOARD RETREAT
360 Colborne Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102**

**May 7, 2022
8:00 a.m.**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m. by Chair Vue.

II. ROLL CALL

Board of Education: J. Kopp, Z. Ellis, U. Ward, H. Henderson, J. Vue, C. Allen, J. Foster

Staff: Superintendent Gothard; Kevin Burns, Director of Communications;
Chuck Long, General Counsel; Kaying Thao, Board Administrator; Sarah
Dahlke, Secretary to the Board

III. BOARD RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT

Kabo Yang, facilitator from Propel Nonprofits, was welcomed and introduced. A grounding exercise was conducted which included hopes for accomplishments at the retreat and introduction. Ms. Yang then led the Board through a presentation, which included the objectives of learning about each other, review of roles and responsibilities, contribution to the strategic plan, developing the team, and grounding from the day.

IV. YEAR IN REVIEW

Superintendent Gothard then led the Board through a presentation recapping the past 2 years. It began with 2021: Return to In-Person Learning, showing key dates, and then through 2021-22 school year, as well as February-April 2021 and updates regarding vaccines, in-person learning, social distancing, and masking, and then May-July 2021 which included updates about in-person graduations, weather, summer learning opportunities, and needs assessment for ARP funding. August-September 2021 showed updates to the Online School, Metro Transit partnership due to the bus driver shortage, COVID mask and vaccination resolutions, and the first day of school in-person for all grades. October-December 2021 showed Envision SPPS, the American Rescue Plan approved by MDE, vaccine clinics, Critical Ethnic Studies graduation requirement, and winter break. January-February 2022 saw new board members sworn in, Omicron surge, student walkout after the killing of Amir Locke, and mediation with SPFE. March-April 2022 saw the settlement of the contract and avoidance of the strike with SPFE, COVID levels improved, graduation requirements, masks optional, and Juneteenth as an official district holiday. He also provided an overview on leadership reorganization.

V. REVIEW OF ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Chuck Long, General Counsel, then provided an overview on Robert's Rules of Order for board members to conduct effective meetings. Scenarios were discussed, as well as a recommendation to consult with General Counsel if needed prior to meetings for guidance.

VI. STANDARDS AND PRACTICES IN COMMUNICATION

Kevin Burns, Director of Communications, then shared a presentation to discuss Board communication strategy, including communication pathways, and overall perception. He noted that as elected officials, students, families, staff and the community look to the Board for communication.

VII. COUNCIL OF GREAT CITY SCHOOLS - COHORT TRAINING OVERVIEW

Director Vue, Director Kopp, and Director Ward then led the Board through a conversation about their training with the Council of the Great City Schools on student focused outcomes governance. The overview included a framework that is detailed and sequences - a step by step guide for shifting board focus over time to center what students know and are able to do. It requires self-evaluation, community engagement and education, setting goals and guardrails, and progress monitoring. Key terms were reviewed, as well as the definition of student outcomes - a measure of school system results that are student results rather than adult results. Inputs, outputs and outcomes definitions were also reviewed. Other points of the presentation included goals and guardrails, and an example from Atlanta Public Schools website. Reflections from the training were also shared. This would be complementary to the strategic plan. Timeline for this was also discussed, as well as further information on measurements for success within SPPS Achieves.

VIII. BOARD CALENDAR REVIEW AND ASSIGNMENTS

Kaying Thao, Administrator to the Board, then led the Board through a review of the calendar of meetings and topics, as well as board member assignments to committees and school areas. Board members noted the goal of visiting schools in their areas, as well as noted that it would be helpful to hear updates from board members about events or news/observations in their schools. It was also noted that in previous years, schools invited their respective board members to events, and if they were unable to attend, another board member would attend, and a composite school event calendar may be helpful. Board members also noted that a highlight of a different school each board meeting may be helpful to showcase them and the great work happening in each building or program.

IX. BOARD GOALS - INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE

Board members then reviewed their individual and board goals. One of the topics addressed was SEAB, and the process for the group moving forward. Another goal was community engagement for the board. Short-term and long-term goals, both individual and collective, were shared. Another goal mentioned was comprehensive training on culturally relevant material for staff by August 2022, as well as cultural programming, similar to the Hmong and French immersion programs, for Black students, and increase in literacy for all students. Fossil fuel divestments was also noted as a goal, improved relationships with bargaining units, as well as increasing the board's ability to institute change and budget, and enrollment. Another goal mentioned was student engagement, time management and spending time in buildings, as well as sustainability and ways to address climate change within the district. Another goal was to support

the evaluation of board workgroups and subcommittees, and guidelines and practices for those groups. The goal of the shift to student focused outcomes governance was also noted. School visits were also noted as a goal for many board members. A long-term goal shared was also a needs assessment around the resolution condemning xenophobia and anti-Asian discrimination that was brought forward by former Chair, Marny Xiong.

There was also further discussion on the process for SEAB, including timeline, and options for student voice on the Board.

X. ADJOURNMENT

In closing, board members shared their thoughts about the retreat, and what they would like to see more of going forward. Appreciation was expressed to board members for their leadership and the different assets that are brought to the board by each member, as well as further details on the CGCS training on student outcomes focused government, including timeline and process.

The retreat adjourned at 3:48 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