

**MEETING MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD MEETING
February 22, 2018**

PRESENT: Board of Education: Z. Ellis, J. Brodrick, M. Vanderwert, M. Xiong, J. Foster

Staff: Superintendent Gothard, C. Baker, K. Wilcox-Harris, J. Allen, L. Cathey, J. Williams, R. Currier, S. Dahlke

Other: M. Greenway, Y. Daniels, T. Lonetree, M. Wall, J. Verges

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:37 p.m.

II. AGENDA

A. Strategy Development Update

Superintendent Gothard began the meeting with a recap of the updates on the strategic plan development. This plan will set a clear vision for where we want to go and how we want to go our actions in improving student achievement to guide our decision-making. This plan will focus on **teaching and learning**; it is not an infrastructure plan. The strategy will be about student achievement and working with students in schools. There will be other intentions of the plan involving innovative practices and looking for new ways in partnering with the community around increasing student achievement. As a reminder, we initiated an RFP for a strategy firm to assist us in this work. Greenway Strategy Group was the selected finalist. Since November, the Greenway team has been conducting an analysis of the District through information provided through reports, surveys, and meetings with leadership and partners. It was stressed that the draft long-term outcomes and strategic focus will be presented tonight. They are being presented for feedback and to go into the community with a plan, and will be open for adjustments as needed. Community engagement has been integral in helping to shape the framework for the plan, including information received in the superintendent search survey responses and Listen and Learn sessions. Over the next several weeks, we will conduct and compile stakeholder feedback with group presentations available across the District.

Project Overview

Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Scan • Organizational Assessment 	Phase 1: Analysis November - January
Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze Implications (SWOT for District) 	
Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define Desired Future: Vision, Mission, Long-term Outcomes 	Phase 2: Strategy Development February - June
Step 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Strategic Focus Areas, Objectives and Measures 	
Step 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define Strategic Initiatives 	
Step 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Action Plans 	Phase 3: Action Planning June-December
Step 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Monitoring and Review Process 	

Strategic Plan Components

The Direction:

- Mission – descriptive statement of purpose; WHAT we do
- Long-Term Outcomes – specific measurable results to achieve
- Strategic Focus – areas that must be addressed to achieve long-term outcomes
- Strategic Objectives – choices about how to address the strategic themes

The Methods

- Strategic Initiatives – significant projects to implement the objectives
- Action Plans – how to get the projects done

Kernels of a Good Strategy

Phase 1: Analysis	A diagnosis: an explanation of the nature of the challenge. A good diagnosis simplifies the often overwhelming complexity of reality by identifying certain aspects of the situation as being the critical ones.
Phase 2: Strategy Development	A guiding policy: an overall approach chosen to cope with or overcome the obstacles identified in the diagnosis. If we work on this diagnosis, all parts will rise with it.
Phase 3: Action Planning	Coherent actions: steps that are coordinated with one another to support the accomplishment of the guiding policy.

SPPS Strategic Planning Process

The process from Phase 1: Analysis to Phase 2: Strategy Development to Phase 3: Action Planning was reviewed, with tasks assigned under each phase. Currently, we are at the beginning on Phase 2: Strategy Development. Communication is important to all phases. The work began in November 2017, and Phase 3 of Action Planning is scheduled to be completed December 2018.

Data and Statistics

- Over the last 15 years, overall SPPS enrollment has declined approximately 16%. The approximate decrease from 1999 to 2015 is -7231.
- Over the last 10 years, SPPS residents have increasingly chose non-SPPS options. From 2005 to 2017, 5,970 Saint Paul residents have chosen non-SPPS options.
 - Among the non-SPPS options, charter school enrollment has seen the greatest increase over the past 10 years. Around 2008-2009 is when the changes started to occur.
- SPPS has a more diverse student racial composition than the state overall.
- The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment Scale Scores and Achievement Levels were reviewed.
 - Over 40% of SPPS students do not meet standards in tested subjects (math, reading, science).
 - A greater percentage of students of color do not meet standards, and fewer exceed.
 - A greater percentage of economically disadvantaged students do not meet standards, and fewer exceed.
 - A greater percentage of special education students do not meet standards, and fewer exceed.
 - A greater percentage of English Language Learner students do not meet standards, and fewer exceed.
 - White students, regardless of income, perform at higher levels than other students in math and reading.

- 4-year graduation rates have increased overall to 76.5% and the gaps are closing, with the exception of students in special education.
- The SPPS graduation rate is below the U.S. average and that one many comparable districts nationwide.
- ACT scores have been relatively flat from 2015-2017, and racial disparities persist.
 - Saint Paul ACT scores have been relatively flat over time, and significantly more white students achieve a score indicating college readiness comparable to students of color.
- Seamless college enrollment among 2016 SPPS graduated was in line with national averages.
- SPPS college enrollment has declined slightly overall from 2009-2016, and among all student groups
- However, persistence among SPPS graduates is slightly lower than national averages.
- SPPS graduated who seamlessly enroll in college gain an Associate's or Bachelor's degree within 6 years at higher rated than students nationally.
- College persistence has increased slightly for most student groups.
- About 2/3 of SPPS students who seamlessly enroll in college attend a 4-year institution.
- The vast majority of SPPS students report that they feel safe at school at grades 8 and 11.
- SPPS students' responses are similar to statewide averages across all grades on items related to connections at school. Overall, students feel connected.
- Over the last 4 years, SPPS has hired approximately 180 teachers each year; approximately 18% of which were people of color.
 - The SPPS teacher population does not reflect the diversity of the student population.
 - Stakeholder feedback confirms the need for greater diversity in the teaching staff.
- SPPS has more teachers with advanced degrees than the statewide average.
- SPPS teachers have more years of experience than the statewide average.
- Stakeholder feedback supports continued focus on racial equity.
- The stakeholders ratings of District strengths were also reviewed, as well as stakeholder ratings of improvement opportunities.
 - There is a disconnect on school safety between teachers and students.
- Examples of occupations in demand by typical required education in the Twin Cities area for 2017 were shown.
- Ramsey County population is increasing through additional households and births.
- Numerous community initiatives support academic achievement of SPPS students.

Strategic Plan Framework – DRAFT

- Mission – to provide a premier education for all
- Long-Term Outcomes:
 - Eliminate disparities in achievement for racial groups and American Indian students
 - Increase achievement of English Learners
 - Increase kindergarten readiness
 - Improve achievement in 3rd grade reading
 - Improve achievement in 8th grade math
 - Ensure all graduates are college and career ready
- Strategic Focus Areas
 - 1 – Positive School and District Culture
 - 2 – Effective and Culturally Relevant Instruction
 - 3 – Program Evaluation and Resource Allocation
 - 4 – College and Career Paths
 - 5 – Family and Community Partner Advocates
- Strategic initiatives will then be built around the strategic focus areas

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- What are tuition agreements? Answer: It's mainly tuition reimbursements, where services are provided, mainly in special education. They are situations where students are served elsewhere.
- The 40% of SPPS students not meeting standards in tested subject is an alarming statistic. Does that then mean that approximately 60% do meet standards? Answer: 60% of students are either partially meeting, meeting or exceeding. In the state, adding the partially proficient category has opened a gray area, where they are not really meeting, but are also not included in the not meeting category. These 40% are in the lowest category who are not meeting the most fundamental skills to be at least partially proficient.
 - It was also noted that not everyone outside Saint Paul is proficient, however a state to Saint Paul comparison is not really accurate due to demographics and student population. However, this rate is similar to Minneapolis' due to the comparable student population.
- Do we know the percentage in the gray, "partially meets" area? Answer: We can send that information.
- Do we know the demographics of the families who leave the district, and could we make an intelligent guess about how they have affected data over the last 10 years? Those 6000 students we lost over the past 10 years have affected this data. Answer: Over the last 15 years of students who have left the district, 46% have been white students, 15% have been Asian students, and 21% have been American Indian students. There has been an increase in black and Hispanic students.
- Are there more white families leaving SPPS to go outside the district than families of color? That would reflect the number of market share because those families deciding not to come to SPPS would reflect the market share. Answer: The decline by racial group can be added back to the presentation. Enrollment is a major problem in our district. It is a symptom, not a cause. In knowing about the families who are leaving, and why, this is what it's all about.
- School climate will be an ongoing dialogue with students, teachers, staff, and the board. The reality is that there is a perception we need to deal with, especially based on the survey results. We will engage intentionally with teachers, students, and staff on these issues.
- It's also important to note that as we work closely with community organizations that we ensure these organizations are truly helping us, including how much. We want to be absolutely sure that these organizations are giving us support we need, and asking them in the right way for kind of support.
- It was also noted that this plan will set the framework for the strategic plan, and is a chance to take a focused effort on creating initiatives, strategies, and actions on student achievement.
- Community forums will focus on feedback for long-term outcomes, strategic focus area feedback, what works, their likes, missing parts, and dislikes and changes.
- The District's focus in the next months will be refining the plan, and revising based on community feedback.
- It was also noted that in order for this plan to be successful, it needs to be simple and easy to understand so that everyone can be onboard and know their part. The plan will fit onto one page for easy visibility. Each focus area will then go into more detail with a blueprint.
- What is the origin of innovation? Answer: Innovation in itself is not effectiveness. In order to be innovative, we need to communicate and try new things, but also maybe revisit old things that were not fully resourced, and deploy them systematically.
- A board member noted that it is interesting that we have disparities among race, which are greater than other districts, yet we have longer term, and highly skilled teachers. Answer: Research on factors of teacher effectiveness and longevity is not correlated with student achievement.

- A board member also noted that it would be interesting to see achievement outcomes and how they line up with funding. It may be interesting knowledge for advocacy.
- A board member also noted that it's important to also place importance on the social emotional achievement of children, and focus on the whole student, instead of only math and reading.
- Another board member noted that it will be interesting to view the long-term outcomes for the community as well. Leaders responded that they will be meeting with Mayor Carter soon, as one of his three pillars for the City is education.
- The Board asked what they can do to support this plan. Answer: We want you to be able to continue to ask questions and understand with confidence to take SPPS to new heights. It will be complicated and challenging at times, however we must all work together to accomplish our goals and continue to stay engaged to have all voices heard.
- Where are we starting in community engagement? Answer: PACs and community organizations will be scheduled for discussions. There will also be an open invitation for individuals and groups to participate in a presentation on the strategic plan so that everyone can understand and ask questions, and offer their feedback for this important work. We will work with our partners, families, community, and businesses to ensure we hear input from diverse groups. There are universal wants and needs for our children.
- Another board member noted that it will be interesting to look at the data between gender and proficiency, as well as the implications for cultural relevant instruction. She also noted that we need to dive deeper into the data for college enrolment, since our female students are more likely to attend. How can we be more relevant for our male students, or what interventions need to occur?
- The disaggregation of the data would also be interesting, not only in terms of gender groups, as well as racial groups. In the data on school district comparisons, it would be interesting to look at specific populations within each district. For example, our district is unique in a high population of ELL students, as well as other ethnic groups, and looking at other districts with similar populations of our racial groups to determine what we are doing to support them in comparison to what others are doing well

III. ADJOURNMENT

It was motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:18 p.m. The motion passed by acclaim.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Dahlke
Assistant Clerk