

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625
Saint Paul, Minnesota
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF EDUCATION

July 12, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:36 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mr. Schumacher, Ms. Ellis, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Vue, Ms. Vanderwert, Mr. Thein, Interim Superintendent, Ms. Cameron, General Counsel and Ms. Polsfuss, Assistant Clerk

Mr. Marchese joined the meeting at 4:40 p.m.

III. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA

MOTION: Mr. Schumacher moved approval of the Main Agenda as published. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vanderwert.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Schumacher	Yes
Mr. Marchese	Yes
Ms. Ellis	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Mr. Vue	Yes
Ms. Vanderwert	Yes

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Exploration of Public Engagement Process to Provide Board with Input on Hiring of Superintendent

The Minnesota State Office of Collaboration (OCDR) and the Dispute Resolution Institute at Mitchell Hamline School of Law (DRI) offered a proposal to partner with the SPPS District, St. Paul Federation of Teachers, parent groups, student groups, community groups and other stakeholders in a project to use dialogue and community engagement to build stakeholders' capacity to address ongoing challenges around school climate, school safety, equity, school discipline and other issues identified by the stakeholders. The goal of the project is not to solve a particular issue, but rather to improve relationships and expand the stakeholders' capacity to continually engage with each other to make progress on these complex issues.

They proposed a two-phase process.

- Phase I would be to work with stakeholders including the district, the unions, the PTA, community groups, neighborhood associations, student government and others to collaboratively design and implement a stakeholder engagement process that would

provide the district with input on the hiring of the new superintendent. The goal of this effort would be, not only to facilitate a smooth and successful process for hiring the new superintendent, but to expand the stakeholders' capacity to collaboratively address the ongoing challenges of school climate, school safety, equity, and discipline by building relationships, improving communication, increasing collaboration and more.

- Phase II would be to assist the stakeholders in collaboratively addressing these issues.

The first step in the process – the assessment - is to identify and meet with all stakeholder groups. The purpose of these meetings is to assess whether stakeholders would like to engage in this process; whether it makes sense to proceed based on factors such as external deadlines, level of interest, available alternatives, etc; and a to create a final project proposal which details participants, timelines, deliverables, etc.

If the initial assessment leads to the mutual conclusion that the project should proceed, stakeholders will work with OCDR and DRI to collaboratively design an engagement process. Upon conclusion of Phase I, stakeholders and OCDR/DRI will determine whether or not to proceed with Phase II based upon interest, resources, availability of alternatives, etc. Should they elect to continue the project, they would again work with OCDR and DRI to collaboratively design an engagement process to address the broader issues.

Key elements of this project include:

- Design, implementation, and management of the project are collaborative with all stakeholders having an equal voice.
- Decisions are made by consensus (not majority rules).
- The project will build upon and support the existing extensive community engagement and problem solving resources in the SPPS community.
- The process is iterative.

Proposed Timeline

- July-August 2016: Phase I assessment
- September 2016: Phase I process design
- October 2016 – January 2017: Phase I engagement process
- February 2017: Submit input to district
- March 2017: Phase II assessment
- April 2017: Phase II process design
- May – December 2017: Phase II engagement process

Questions/Discussion:

- Where in this process do you see development of criteria for finding candidates? Response: It will get clearer as we work with the Board and stakeholders. This is a very collaborative process that will generate ways the various communities can be included in the process, define what they are looking for, criteria, etc. It is also assumed SPPS will be working with a consultant to find and vet actual candidates.
- What is Phase II. Response: That would be the work on equity issues. We are looking at SPPS because they are already working on equity issues -- school climate, school safety, dispute resolution. We also assume the Board will want community input on hiring a new superintendent. That would be the initial phase of the process. The initial phase would establish the working groups and expose them to the process, the second phase would explore, in depth, working out the various equity issues facing the district. Both phases involve a collaborative process, the scope and conversations would be defined as the process moves forward.
- What have you done in the past? Response: We have worked with a number of public sector entities on a wide variety of issues. MNSCU regarding a no confidence in chancellor issue which resulted in a redesign around negotiations. The St. Peter Security Hospital on patient care and staff safety. This resulted in a set of recommendations on how to improve patient care quality and labor management relations. The process can result in a number of outcomes such as legislative changes, better employee/management relations, etc.

- At the end of Phase I, is that where the Board would be presented with recommendations regarding the superintendent search? Response: Yes.
- What would Phase II address then? Response: Equity issues facing the district. It would establish what issues need to be addressed, who would be involved and establish desired outcomes.
- What would the timeframe be for Phase I so the Board would have information that might be helpful when they vet candidates? Response: Timing of this process with the search timing would be important. The process would also build relationships for future efforts. We estimate this input would be ready around February.
- What experience have you had in working with communities of color, with many cultural differences within the communities of color? Response: Diverse communities would be the focus of this grant work we would be doing. The work would develop what team members would look like; we always work with a core group of stakeholders who inform the work and process. We also know what resources are needed by participants in order to be available to engage (interpreters, child care, etc).
- It was noted it will be important to have a very diverse group able to work in culturally sensitive ways.
- Where is the grant money from and what are the grant expectations? Response: The grant was made by the American Arbitration Assn Foundation. This is their first grant cycle and they are excited about our proposal to work in a long-term way on equity issues. We hope this work will develop capacity and relationships to enable SPPS to work on future issues in a collaborative and equitable way. The greatest value of this process is that it strengthens relationships and allows work to move forward on difficult issues.
- The Board noted it is interested in getting input into the process for hiring the next superintendent. Concerns are that going out into the community to get diverse representation and then to get consensus from such a large group of organizations will be challenging. As the Board goes through this process it cannot relinquish its authority to choose the next superintendent. The Board can solicit input from the community but cannot send the message that the Board will give up its authority to choose the next superintendent. Response: It is important that we are clear about expectations from the beginning. The groups will develop recommendations, the group does not have power to implement. There is power in groups coming together and reaching consensus but they will be clear that the ultimate authority will make the final decision. We will work to refine how we talk and think about that. From the beginning we must be clear about the level of input the group will have. In turn, the community groups will need to be clear, from the Board's perspective, how the Board will treat the groups recommendations. The Board must be willing to consider to those recommendations.
- What is the nature of this collaborative process? Response: The expectation is that there would be on-going dialogue among the groups and the Board. It would be a collaboration of stakeholders working toward making recommendations to the Board. All stakeholders will have agreement on the design of the process and reach agreement on how to get feedback. The group will reach consensus on recommendations brought forward to the Board. We hope the Board will be a part of the process design and work within the process as we move forward.
- The Board Chair indicated this presentation is informational and the Board will have discussions on how they want to move forward.
- The Board is ultimately responsible for hiring the superintendent. How will planning and design involve the Board? Response: We will talk with the Board and stakeholder groups, after we talk to the groups we will modify the proposal as to what we want to do. We will create an advisory group with Board representation on it to carry the work forward regarding what is being planned. Of course, the Board could come up with a process to get public input, the Board could figure out its own way.
- This suggests the process is not owned by the Board but is designed collectively by all stakeholders in defining outcomes, to reach consensus on the process and to reach recommendations from the group. Response: Yes, it would lay a foundation around collaborative relationships, build a way of getting input, further build relationships for ongoing input and establish a foundation for moving forward.

- It is a process to determine the process. I think I want to have a sense of what outcomes might be. Response: By doing something more open you are opening avenues to other options and ways things might be done. You need to be willing to do things differently -- as you are hearing from the community and your stakeholders. It is an idea that could have a twofold benefit – a deep community engagement process and building capacity and structures that will continue to benefit the district in the future.
- We would facilitate conversations as an outside entirely neutral entity.
- The comment was made that this is high risk with potential of high return.

Thanks were extended to the presenters for bringing their recommendation forward. The Board indicated they would consider the proposal.

BF 30514 Acceptance of Resignation of Director Jean O'Connell

MOTION: **Director Schumacher moved acceptance of the letter of resignation from Jean O'Connell. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brodrick.**

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Schumacher	Yes
Mr. Marchese	Yes
Ms. Ellis	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Mr. Vue	Yes
Ms. Vanderwert	Yes

C. Process for Filling Board of Education Vacancy

The General Counsel indicated the law requires that the Board appoint a candidate to fill the vacant position on an interim basis despite the short time period. The Board must also call a special election in order to fill the position for the remaining one year of Ms. O'Connell's term. Board policy requires an application process, that the vacancy be published and that interview process be held. She indicated a one interview process would be most efficient in getting someone on board quickly. She also noted the law has been changed so that the appointment is not effective until 30 days after appointment is made.

The Board chair stated there are three decisions to be made: (1) length of application period (2) Use of one or two interviews and (3) Clarification on whether the Board can ask that the applicants not consider running in the special election for the remaining year of term.

The General Counsel stated that if an applicant wants to run they will have to file during the same period they are making application to the Board for the interim term.

Questions/Discussion:

- So they can take office after they are certified? Response: Yes, once the election returns are certified the person elected will serve out the remainder of the term.
- I have some concerns about who might run. We do not want the perception the Board is influencing the process even though there is an election involved. Applicants will want to run but the Board may not have appointed the choice from the election. The decision ultimately rests back with the voters.
- Counsel stated her recommendation for the interview process was based on timeframe and circumstance. Also, you cannot legally prevent someone from running for office.
- If we did not fill the position what would the consequences be? Response: There is no penalty stated in law, it states only that the Board must fill it and this is interpreted as mandatory even with the short term to be served.
- Are you suggesting it not be filled? Response: It seems most logical considering the timeframe not to fill it by appointment but to wait for the special election results.
- Is there agreement on not filling the position? (There was no consensus.)
- If we get this all done quickly we can move ahead with applications.

- We can always ask if they are planning to run and factor that into the decision.
- I would recommend the shorter process of one interview with the expectation that someone will want the experience of serving even for the short amount of time.

MOTION: Mr. Schumacher moved that "Applications to fill the Board vacancy open upon posting of Vacancy to Board and SPPS website on Wednesday, July 13, 2016. The deadline for submission of applications is Friday, July 22, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. If there are six (6) or fewer total applications for the vacant position the Board will interview all candidates. If there are seven (7) or more total applications for the position each Board member will nominated up to two (2) applicants for the interview process. Interviews of selected applicants will take place on Tuesday, August 2, 2016 beginning at 4:00 p.m. in Rooms A & B at the Saint Paul Public School's Administration Office, 360 Colborne Street, St. Paul, MN 55102 after which the Board of Education will make their selection of the applicant to fill the position vacated by Jean O'Connell on June 30, 2016." Mr. Brodrick seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Schumacher	Yes
Mr. Marchese	Yes
Ms. Ellis	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Mr. Vue	Yes
Ms. Vanderwert	Yes

BF 30515 RESOLUTION CALLING SPECIAL ELECTION TO FILL VACANT SCHOOL BOARD OFFICE

WHEREAS, the office of School Board Member became vacant effective June 30, 2016 with the resignation of Jean O'Connell; and

WHEREAS, the vacancy occurred more than 90 days prior to the Tuesday following the first Monday in November of 2016; and

WHEREAS, the current term of that office is in its third year and said term will expire on the first Monday in January 2018, i.e., January 1, 2018; and

WHEREAS, Minn. Stat. § 123B.09, subd. 5b (2016) and Section 2.05 (B) of the Saint Paul City Charter require that a special election be held in conjunction with the state general election to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School Board does hereby authorize and call a special election of the School District, to be held in conjunction with the state general election on November 8, 2016; and be it further

RESOLVED, that candidates to fill this vacancy must file affidavits of candidacy with the Ramsey County Elections Office during the period beginning on August 2, 2016 and ending on August 16, 2016; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Ramsey County Elections Office is hereby authorized to make all necessary preparations and give the required notices to conduct the special election.

MOTION: Mr. Schumacher moved the Board approve the Resolution Calling Special Election to Fill Vacant School Board Office. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brodrick.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Schumacher	Yes
Mr. Marchese	Yes
Ms. Ellis	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Mr. Vue	Yes
Ms. Vanderwert	Yes

E. Action to Schedule Closed Board of Education Meeting for update on pending litigation.

MOTION: Mr. Schumacher moved the Board of Education schedule the following Special (Closed) Board of Education meeting for Tuesday, August 9, 2016 4:30 p.m. for the purposed of a discussion on pending litigation. Ms. Ellis seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Schumacher	Yes
Mr. Marchese	Yes
Ms. Ellis	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Mr. Vue	Yes
Ms. Vanderwert	Yes

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Marchese moved the meeting adjourn, seconded by Ms. Ellis.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Schumacher	Yes
Mr. Marchese	Yes
Ms. Ellis	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Mr. Vue	Yes
Ms. Vanderwert	Yes

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 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
Marilyn Polsfuss
Assistant Clerk,
St. Paul Public Schools Board of Education