

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625**  
**Saint Paul, Minnesota**  
**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**June 10, 2014**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Ms. Seeba, Mr. Hardy, Ms. O'Connell, Mr. Brodrick, Mr. Vue, Ms. Carroll, Ms. Doran, Superintendent Silva, Mr. Lalla, General Counsel, Ms. Polsfuss, Assistant Clerk

**III. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Ms. Carroll moved the Board approve the order of the agenda. Ms. O'Connell seconded the motion.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

|               |        |
|---------------|--------|
| Ms. Seeba     | Absent |
| Mr. Hardy     | Yes    |
| Ms. O'Connell | Yes    |
| Mr. Brodrick  | Yes    |
| Mr. Vue       | Yes    |
| Ms. Carroll   | Yes    |
| Ms. Doran     | Yes    |

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Action on Non-Renewal of Probationary Teachers**

This year there are a total of 53 employees recommended for non-renewal (52 teachers and 1 principal). Of the 52 teachers, 12 chose to resign prior to the recommendation for non-renewal going to the Board. The principal candidate held tenure rights back to their previous position or an equivalent one. All non-renewals were for performance related issues.

The purpose of June 10, 2014 special board meeting was to ask for Board approval for the non-renewal of probationary teachers

The Data Privacy Act prevents discussion of individual data, thus only summary data was discussed.

MN Statute 122A.41 (cities of the first class) applies to Saint Paul Public Schools. This law defines the probationary period as the first three (3) years of consecutive employment. During the probationary period, any annual teaching contract may or may not be renewed, for any reason. Subd. 4 (b) – A probationary teacher is deemed to have been reemployed for the ensuing school year, unless the school board gives written notice before July 1 of the termination of employment. Therefore, all non-renewed teachers must be notified prior to July 1.

The probationary period is a time for the District and the employee to determine if the employment relationship is meeting their expectations. Even though SPPS may non-renew for ANY reason, the most common reasons include:

- License (not fully licensed for the position which they hold)
- Performance - not meeting expectations (effective instruction, classroom management, team work/professional behavior).
- Budget – vacancies are fewer than needed to place current staff.
- Some combination or other relevant reasons (training)

All teachers recommended for non-renewal are notified in writing and given the option to meet with their Assistant Superintendent to discuss the reasons for the non-renewal. Assistant Superintendents then make their recommendations to the Superintendent. This year, like last year, probationary teachers recommended for non-renewal were given the option to resign their employment prior to their Assistant Superintendent making their recommendation to the Superintendent.

This year 21 (of which six resigned) probationary teachers recommended for non-renewal were supported through the Peer Assistance and Review Program. These teachers worked with a PAR-consulting teacher who provided significant coaching and mentoring during the school year. Both the PAR consultant and the principal evaluated these teachers and the PAR consultant made a recommendation for non-renewal to the PAR Board. The PAR Board then provided recommendations to the Superintendent.

Teachers not served by PAR receive a minimum of two observations, which are reviewed with the teacher and are provided assistance if not meeting standards of effective teaching. Supports include mentors and Professional Development.

#### QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- What other supports are provided for non-PAR mentored teachers? Response: Mentoring from teachers and/or coaches along with additional professional development.
- It was noted a PAR teacher can only be in that position for a maximum of three years and then must go back into the classroom
- Is there compensation for the mentorship function by senior teachers? Response: Yes, there is a stipend for being a mentor.
- When look at non-renewals in general over the years, how is the decision making structure tied into the commitment of having staff reflect the racial diversity of district? Response: This year's non-renewals reflected the ethnicity of the district.
- So diversity is looked at after the fact? The comment was made that the Board, at some point, would like to understand more about what SPPS is doing going forward to recruit highly qualified teaching staff who reflect its population. Response: SPPS is looking to target recruiting efforts at schools that are historically Black or Latino serving institutions to increase the pool of candidates. SPPS is using a more personal touch in those schools, private networking receptions on the district, racial equity work description, etc. The District is hopeful it will see an increase in the diversity of the teacher pool that will transition into more teachers of color in the district.
- Staff noted Principals are disappointed when teachers cannot make it but especially a teacher of color. Many intercessions are provided to assist individuals who are not meeting expectations.
- The Future Educator Program at Como Park High School – perhaps someone could talk with the kids in the program so they might transition into teachers of the future in SPPS.

- What was the demographics of the 53 candidates:? 27 were Year 1, 12 were Year 2 and 13 were Year 3. 31 were female and 21 male. Three Asian Pacific Islanders, 0 in the American Indian/Native American category, four Black/African American, two Hispanic and 43 White/Caucasian.
- To have second and third year teachers being non-renewed, is there a disconnect somewhere that a teacher receives non-renewal in Year 2 and 3? Response: In 2014 everyone had support provided to them. Some of the disconnect happens when they receive PAR support but when that goes away and the individual is still in the classroom they may begin to struggle.
- What supports are available in that situation? Response: Mentoring, a Vertical Alignment Team comes in. In 2014, most second year probationers had a PAR coach. Support may be given in the third year but if the individual is still not meeting expectations they become non-renewed. Data shows teachers will not get better after three years of effort to improve.
- The Principal candidate is still in the district? Response: Yes, they agreed to go into an assistant principal position.
- What supports are provided to the principal candidates? Response: They are now in a position that will not impact students adversely. They will collaborate with a strong principal to work on their shortcomings. They may be provided some additional mentoring but the focus is now on leadership support.
- What percentage of probationary teachers are non-renewed? Response: SPPS had 783 probationary teachers this year. The non-renewals represent 6.6% of that group.
- Are any special supports provided to try to retain more teachers of color? Response: If possible they are paired with someone of the same race as a mentor or with a PAR with experience in same instructional area. If they cannot be retained as a teacher, efforts are made to put them into a different position (EA/TA) so efforts are made to try to retain some individuals. As SPPS moves forward and there is an increase in various ethnic populations among teachers, it is looking at affinity groups to help teachers of color feel less isolated, etc. Success in the classroom is first and foremost with any teacher. SPPS needs to find the right environment for new teachers to get started in and provide resources within the district and community as well as partnering with more senior leaders in the district as mentor/role models. SPPS coaches for success regardless of race or ethnicity.
- Does HR/administration review the person's records and recommendations before they are non-renewed? Response: Yes.

**MOTION:**                    **Mr. Hardy moved the Board of Education approve the non-renewal of the probationary teachers listed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Carroll.**

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

|               |        |
|---------------|--------|
| Ms. Seeba     | Absent |
| Mr. Hardy     | Yes    |
| Ms. O'Connell | Yes    |
| Mr. Brodrick  | Yes    |
| Mr. Vue       | Yes    |
| Ms. Carroll   | Yes    |
| Ms. Doran     | Yes    |

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:**                    **Ms. O'Connell moved the meeting adjourn; seconded by Ms. Carroll**

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

|               |        |
|---------------|--------|
| Ms. Seeba     | Absent |
| Mr. Hardy     | Yes    |
| Ms. O'Connell | Yes    |
| Mr. Brodrick  | Yes    |
| Mr. Vue       | Yes    |
| Ms. Carroll   | Yes    |
| Ms. Doran     | Yes    |

The meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Marilyn Polsfuss  
Assistant Clerk