

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625
SAINT PAUL, MN
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**

November 18, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was reconvened at 6:34 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mr. Hardy, Ms. Kong-Thao, Ms. O'Connell, Ms. Varro, Mr. Brodrick, Ms. Street-Stewart, Ms. Carroll

III ORDER OF THE AGENDA

The Chair stated the purposed of meeting was the interview of Valeria Silva for the position of Superintendent for Saint Paul Public Schools.

Ms. Silva was welcomed and the interview was conducted with the following questions being asked of her.

1. Ms. Silva: The superintendent's role in raising standards and closing the achievement gap is different from that of all other staff. Over the next three years, what executive leadership would you provide to significantly close these gaps?
2. Ms. Silva: You have been successful using an inclusion model to help close the achievement gap with ELL students, and are now using similar strategies with special education. As superintendent, what leadership and guidance would you provide to ensure that these approaches are properly *evaluated* and adjusted over time to meet changing student needs?
3. Ms. Silva: You have tremendous passion, belief, and commitment. How do you know when it is time to drive something forward, and when it is time to listen and learn? How to you balance the need for authentic collaboration with the requirements for individual leadership?
4. Ms. Silva: What is your plan for transitioning successfully from your current peer relationships into the very different role of superintendent?
5. Ms. Silva: We want to talk about succession planning, both from your current position and as a superintendent. How would you empower staff to ensure that key initiatives continue?
6. Ms. Silva: Please share your vision for and some examples of how families and districts can interact successfully in support of student success. In particular, what different roles and relationships can families have, and as superintendent, how would you provide the necessary leadership to ensure this?
 - As a follow-up, what are your ideas about engaging families who are inexperienced or uncomfortable with participating; how would you support your staff to successfully and respectfully reach out to such families?
7. Ms. Silva: Tell us your thinking about shared accountability – the district, students, families, and the entire community

8. Ms. Silva: Give us your best 3-minute speech convincing St. Paul families from across cultures, incomes, and languages, to send their children to St. Paul Public Schools.
9. Ms. Silva: We know that collaborative relationships and partnerships are critical to student success. What have you done to build external relationships that have measurably improved student outcomes, and how would your particular leadership skills shape how that would be done under your tenure as a superintendent?
 - Once those relationships are built, what have you learned about maintaining relationships like these, and how would you bring those learnings to the role as superintendent here?
10. Ms. Silva: We anticipate budget cuts for several more years, and are considering using a Zero Based Budgeting approach for our 2010-11 fiscal year. Of course, some funds are legally or otherwise restricted or targeted, and we have a long history of site-based budgeting. So thinking as a superintendent, what kind of process might you follow to prepare a draft budget?
11. Ms. Silva: There is concern that our District needs healing in key relationships. Tell us about a time when you moved into a group with trust issues. What did you do to improve the situation? What skills are critical in situations like this, and what behaviors would you expect your direct reports to model?
12. Ms. Silva: Let's talk for a moment about the students for whom traditional schools do not work. Please share your experience, philosophy, and organizational approach to alternative education.
13. Ms. Silva: What leadership roles have you played on critical education issues at the state, regional, or national level? What difference did you make? How might you use those learnings and your discretionary power as superintendent to elevate issues that are critical to St. Paul Public Schools?
14. Ms. Silva: What benefits will SPPS realize by your having graduated from the Broad superintendent's program?
15. Ms. Silva: As superintendent, what leadership would you provide to recruit and retain qualified professional staff of color?
16. Ms. Silva: What experience or knowledge do you have with any system that relates pay to performance? If any, please provide a complete description of the process, partners, pitfalls, and outcomes. If not, provide us your thoughts on such an approach.
17. Ms. Silva: The guidelines for the second round of ARRA funding, Race to the Top, just came out last week. We don't expect instant expertise with those, but as our superintendent, how would you work with the MN Department of Education to ensure that St. Paul would be well positioned to access those funds?
18. Ms. Silva: When you leave St. Paul after 10 great years as superintendent of St. Paul Schools, what stories will be told by people in different St. Paul communities about your time here?
19. As you know, our brand is graduate to something great with our desire being to continue on with post secondary education; not all students choose that. What is the district doing well to provide support to students who don't move directly to the path of secondary education? What enhances those paths?
20. When you talked earlier about engaging families inexperienced with the education system or who have had a bad experience with education; how would you support staff to successfully and respectfully reach out to these families to bring them back to education?
21. As technology becomes increasingly important to support learning there is increasing need to bring families up to speed on technology. What kinds of opportunities to engage families in student learning via technology would you provide?
22. How will the district expand early education?

23. You mentioned the graduate to something great and SPPS's relationship with higher education. How will you work to continue our relationships with higher education, what will it take?

24. Elimination of the achievement gap is a moral commandment and will require the expenditure of a great amount of energy and resources. How will we assure parents we are not losing focus in other areas especially in regard to class sizes?

Ms. Silva then made a closing statement.

IV. RECESS

**MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved the meeting recess until 6:30 p.m. on November 19, 2009.
Motion seconded by Ms. Street-Stewart.**

The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Hardy	Yes
Ms. Kong-Thao	Yes
Mr. O'Connell	Yes
Ms. Varro	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Ms. Street-Stewart	Yes
Ms. Carroll	Yes

The meeting recessed at 8:31 p.m.

For clarity and to facilitate research, these minutes reflect the order of the 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