

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

**COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING
360 Colborne Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102**

**December 6, 2022
4:30 p.m.**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Vice Chair Kopp.

II. ROLL CALL

Board of Education: J. Kopp, J. Vue, U. Ward., Z. Ellis, C. Allen
Superintendent Gothard

H. Henderson arrived at 4:40 p.m.

J. Foster was absent.

Staff: J. Turner, K. Thao, C. Long, A. Collins, N. Paez, Y. Vang, C. Anderson,
S. Schmidt de Carranza, S. Dahlke, T. Parent. B. Natala, K. Kimani, E.
Wacker, T. Sager, S. Gray Akyea, A. Kunz, P. Pratt-Cook, M. Yarborough,
C. Green, B. Coleman, D. Abrams, J. Vollmer, A. Kelly, M. Langworthy

Community: L. Bolton, J. Verges, T. Lonetree, J. Farnsworth

III. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA

MOTION: Director Kopp moved approval of the Order of the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Allen. It passed by acclaim.

IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Superintendent Gothard noted that with the Truth in Taxation Hearing at 6:00 p.m. and time certain, that he does not have announcements for this meeting.

V. INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CALENDAR PROCESS

Superintendent Gothard then welcomed Craig Anderson, Executive Director, Office of Teaching and Learning, to present the Inclusive School Calendar Process. He noted that Administration will be bringing forward two years of calendars, and it was heard loud and clear for additional engagement on the

calendar process, and to find ways to be more inclusive with days of observance, and how to embrace community feedback. Mr. Anderson also thanked SPFE for their role in this work as well.

Topics included in the presentation included the history of the calendar process, which included representatives from SPFE, SPPS administration and one parent met to develop the annual calendar recommendations to the Board. Next the call for inclusivity was reviewed, and that many districts have made changes to the school calendar to include days off for Eid, Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah; our SPPS community has expressed interest in more family engagement and staff input in the calendar process. The realities for SPPS were also shared. The MN state statute that clarifies the length of the school year and hours of instructions was also presented. The details of the 2022 calendar process were also discussed. Options for the calendars regarding spring break, winter break, and the end of the school year were also presented. PAC engagement details were shared, as well as meeting with bargaining groups. Data from survey responses from staff and families was shown, with the majority within both groups preferring a two-week winter break, one week of spring break, and the school year ending around June 11. The recommendation includes the approval of

2 years of calendars following Option #1: 2 weeks at winter break / 1 week at spring break; recognize cultural celebrations when possible (Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Eid); work to eliminate interruptions in the first three and last three weeks of the school year; and utilize e-learning days for inclement weather, when appropriate. This is scheduled to be voted upon by the Board at the Regular Meeting on December 13th. The proposed calendars for the 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 school years were also discussed.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Ward requested information on recognizing cultural celebrations when possible. Response: There may be no school on that day, but staff will have professional development, with one example as Yom Kippur. Other holidays and days of observance may also occur on weekends or a day of a break. In 2024-2025, October 3 is Rosh Hashanah, which will be a professional learning day.
- How does it work for staff who may observe that holiday? Response: Contractually, they use a personal day to have that time off; one example is Good Friday, which is staff development. The same is true for Rosh Hashanah last year, where students did not have schools, but staff had two more days to prepare for students at the beginning of the school year.
- Clarification on the balance of interruptions of school time was also provided.
- More details were also provided on e-learning days. There are no digital learning days, as parents were very vocal about not appreciating digital learning days. E-learning days are used for inclement weather which appropriate, or for emergency purposes. We also will have school on Election Day.
- Director Ward also requested further information on e-learning days as opposed to snow days. Superintendent Gothard provided clarification on the use of e-learning days and their relation to scheduled breaks or days within the week. If we know of a strong winter system, schools do a great job of preparing students.
- Information was also requested on the expectations for preparation for an e-learning day, and what we expect of teachers and students. Response: Notifications are sent to staff, and letting them know to remind students to take their device home, and articulating preparedness steps to have in place, as well as posting in Schoology and Seesaw, and sharing with staff on the expectations to ensure students are engaged in learning.

- Further discussion and details were provided on e-learning days and the process for calling an e-learning day when the weather is inclement.
- Director Vue requested further details on the work to eliminate disruptions the first 3 weeks of school and the last 3 weeks of school. Superintendent Gothard noted that SY25-26 has some challenges, and waiting to allow more time to determine the calendar. Some holidays follow the lunar calendar, and move throughout the year, with examples provided. We want students and families to have a solid start and end to the school year, and will take more time to map out the SY25-26 for those holidays that may fall within those windows of the school year and adjust.
- Director Ellis requested information on support for families and connectivity for e-learning days. We work with families to ensure we are sharing district resources and resources from our partners for a level of connectivity throughout the school year.
- Vice Chair Kopp reminded board members that the approval of the calendars will be coming before the Board at the next Regular Meeting, and encouraged them to reach out with questions.

VI. STUDENT OUTCOMES FOCUSED GOVERNANCE: CONTRACT AND BUDGET REVIEW

Vice Chair Kopp then presented the proposed budget and contract for Student Outcomes Focused Governance, as a continuation from the November Committee of the Board discussion. Proposed costs were reviewed for leadership training and support, subject matter experts, coaching support, and other expenses were shared, with the total budget not to exceed \$35,000.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Where are these funds coming from? Response: ARP funding for professional development.
- Where are we in the process of deciding whether to go forward or not? Response: That is a conversation we will continue to have, and the opportunity to discuss is at the Committee of the Board meetings, and trying to gauge interest in going forward.
- Director Ward also noted questions of where we are at the moment in this work, and if the ask is to consider buying into the next steps of SOFG. Response: In terms of signing the contract, that will not be until January at the earliest. At this point, we are still determining board interest in going forward.
- Director Ward noted it seems like the decision has been made with the review of committees and practices, and dates on the calendar for the training, and wants to ensure he knows where we are at in the process.
- Director Allen noted that there are four board seats up for election in 2023, and the possibility of needing to redo the training depending on the results.
- She also noted questions on the ongoing monthly coaching and what that includes. Response: The coaching is determined by our needs in the contract and what we decide. She also noted the annual training opportunities available to board members and aligning our funding with our priorities and values. There is also an allocation per board member in the Board budget for professional development that could be used. More information was requested on that amount per board member.
- Director Ellis noted that with those allocated funds within the Board budget for PD, there may not be additional dollars for any other type of professional development other than PD from the Council of the Great City Schools for SOFG.
- Director Henderson requested information on contract information for other districts.

- Director Ward noted that this seems like a lot of money for what it is, and that we already pay membership dues to CGCS, and that the individual training is \$3500 per person, which feels like a lot. He then shared his personal view of the training, and wondered if there are other governance trainings or team building programs that are a more reasonable cost. Director Kopp noted in comparison to our half-day of facilitators at the previous board retreats, that it is comparable, but is more drawn-out and more hours than the retreat training. Further information from Director Ward was requested on the coaching, and the rationale for coaching ourselves. This budget is laid out for if we need the funds and to ensure they are available. We do foresee the initial \$20,000 for the training, but after that we can evaluate as a Board on next steps.
- What is the plan for consensus? Response: One option is a vote on the contract, which does take time to put into place with both SPPS and CGCS, and the earliest would be in January.
- Vice Chair Kopp also noted that we implement the framework and what it looks like - and the training gives a better understanding of the framework. While she is hoping to proceed with this work and in a greater capacity to understand what it is and to practice it. She understands the hesitancy and is glad to have the conversation for community members to hear. It is important to do this work together and the fate of this is up for us to determine.
- Director Henderson noted it is concerning in being asked to do this and we are not always community-facing with talking about this work. Since we can't clearly define the impact, that's concerning and has hesitancy of asking the Board to implement this work when we can't clearly define it. Director Vue related his experience in this work in learning about the IEP process and the importance of goals and measurements throughout the year, and evaluating the progress as a parent. We will be going to the community to ask them what they see as important, and talk about goals, outcomes and performance as a place to start, and then adjust as needed.
- Director Allen noted concerns about the goals in SOFG and the loopholes historically used to meet those goals. Director Kopp noted there are guardrails in place that say "the superintendent cannot do this to attain a goal." Guardrails are protection of values that may not be passed to achieve the goal. Guardrails can also be adjusted, and the process for interim guardrails was shared with a regular cadence for review at board meetings. The process for removing a guardrail or changing was also discussed.
- Data used in the determination of goals was also discussed, with the Board being able to decide the data - it does not need to be test scores, and we can develop our own metric.
- Director Ward noted his concerns on the narrowing of focus with 3-5 goals and guardrails and the limit of the work of the Board. Another concern of his is voting on the contract in January, which means the Board will be voting to move forward prior to speaking to this topic in a public-facing way. There are a few community members at this meeting, but it is not live streamed. It seems like this is a big decision how to structure the Board's work and we need to invite community to help us to shape it.

VII. STUDENT OUTCOMES FOCUSED GOVERNANCE: COMMITTEE/SUBCOMMITTEE/WORK GROUP REVIEW

Next Vice Chair Kopp led the Board through a discussion on committee and subcommittee work in preparation for the work session at the January 3 Committee of the Board Meeting. The relation to this presentation to SOFG is a discussion on the Board's use of time for this work. The internal, external, and those groups by policy/statute were reviewed, and discussion around the purpose of each, as well as future steps. Recommendations were also shared, including a plan to meet in January 2023 to set a meeting schedule and identify priorities for the upcoming year for internal work groups; if this is new commitment, consider checking in with board members who have previously participated to learn more

about the organization and develop process for notifying alternates for external assignments for external work groups. Next steps include preparing for the January 3rd work session by reviewing all available internal and external assignments and reflection on interests and availability. Policies related to this work were also shared.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Regarding the Evaluation Work Group, Director Henderson noted it will be important to provide updates on the timeline, and monitoring. Director Ward is also interested in the process, and the value in reporting to the community.
- Director Ward noted the review of the board budget is important, and believes it will be important for the treasurer to be involved in the Board Governance and Operations group. He also noted interest in further review of line items within the board budget, and it is important to retain this group. Director Ellis noted that there is little change in the board budget year over year, except for SEAB funding changes
- There was also a review of the Equity Committee and new strategic plan focus area of Systemic Equity.
- Director Ellis noted a review of the cost of memberships and timeline for dues, as well as cost benefits. She also noted a short description of each external group will be helpful.

MOTION: Director Kopp moved to recess the meeting until after the adjournment of the Special Meeting regarding the Pay23 Levy and Truth in Taxation Hearing. Director Ward seconded the motion. It passed by acclaim.

The meeting recessed at 5:44 p.m.

The meet was then reconvened at 6:48 p.m.

VIII. SPPS ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE TO THE 2021-2022 LATINO CONSENT DECREE (LCD) PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC) ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD OF EDUCATION

Superintendent Gothard then welcomed staff to present the SPPS Administrative Response to the 2021-2022 LCD PAC Annual Report. The Latino Consent Decree and its history were shared. Required services under the LCD were also shared, as well as responsible parties for the LCD. Demographics of students were also presented. The LCD action plan and staff involved were discussed, and include the Spanish Language Assessment, Student Plan, Coordination of the LCD, Staffing, and Family Engagement. Details on the timeline were also shown for Phase 1 and Phase 2. Background details on each portion of the action plan were also discussed. The process includes Identification, Assessment, Language Proficiency Levels, Category, and Student Plan. Each are of the plan was then discussed, with details of each area. The full report can also be found in the BoardBook.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Members of the LCD PAC requested information on the language assessment program, as well as the timeline for implementation, and use in the future.

- Members of the PAC also requested information on the student plan area of focus, and staff who will be able to review or edit the LCD tab in Campus, as well as informing staff about the custom tab and its information.
- Members of the PAC also requested information about counselors meeting with elementary students, and personalized learning plans.
- Concerns were also noted about the language assessment being administered upon enrollment at Student Placement and that it may become a long day for families with assessments.
- Members of the PAC requested information on the language assessment being used to guide content areas.
- Members of the PAC also requested information on the number of social workers available to help our students. Clarification was also requested on the commitment to hiring 5LCD teachers for the 2023-24 school year, and the relation to the available teaching positions.
- Information was requested on how to make SPPS and the LCD teaching position attractive to candidates. There needs to be balance of placement of teachers throughout the district as well.
- Board members also asked families about their experience with Xello, and Campus. Families noted that Campus is helpful, but they are not familiar with Xello. One parent also shared his experience with his student in monitoring and discussing from information in Campus.
- Board members also requested information on the identification, needs assessment and language proficiency, and at what point a student is identified to need EL services, with information provided on the home language questionnaire provided at Student Placement. Further discussion also focused on other assessments for students throughout their education. All EL students receive the Tier 1 supports automatically. Further details were also provided on the range of EL services for students, and where there may be barriers.
- More information was requested on the connection between Xello and Campus - there is not a current link between the two apps, but there is a family portal in Xello, and we are working to get information to families on that.
- The importance of Parent Academy was also noted, especially for questions in navigating Campus and Xello.
- Mr. Matamoros thanked the PAC, as well as Ms. Brueken with the timeline, and noted that the conversation does not stop here, and the District is committed to regular meetings and dive deeper into these areas. Chief Turner thanked the families and staff for joining on this journey, and noted the work of the Innovation Office to implement these items with fidelity, and is excited for the progress made. She also thanked the Board for their support in this work.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Director Kopp moved to adjourn the meeting. Director Henderson seconded the motion. It passed by acclaim.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 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