

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625
Saint Paul, Minnesota

COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING
Via Telephonic and Video Conference; Available via Live Stream at www.spps.org/boe

April 13, 2021
4:30 p.m.

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Vice Chair Vue.

II. ROLL CALL

Board of Education: J. Kopp, Z. Ellis, J. Brodrick, J. Vue, C. Allen
J. Foster joined shortly after Call to Order.

Staff: Superintendent Gothard; Chuck Long, General Counsel; Cedrick Baker, Chief of Staff; Dave Watkins, Chief of Schools; Marie Schrul, Chief Financial Officer; Jackie Turner, Chief Operations Officer; Kate Wilcox-Harris Chief Academic Officer; Kenyatta McCarty, Executive Director, Human Resources; Kevin Burns, Director of Communications; Kaying Thao, Administrator to the Board; Sarah Dahlke, Secretary to the Board

III. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA

MOTION: Director Vue moved approval of the Order of the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Brodrick.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Kopp	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes
Director Foster	Absent
Director Brodrick	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes

IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Superintendent Gothard welcomed students, families and staff back from Spring Break to begin the meeting. He reminded the community of the importance of safety protocols, including testing, masks, distancing, and to stay home if feeling sick. It's important for us to enter the final stage of re-opening our

buildings and ensure we are able to keep the momentum going to June to end this difficult year, and transition to summer school and next year.

He also offered our deepest sorrow on behalf of SPPS to the Family of Daunte Wright. He noted the resources for support available to ensure our students, families, and staff feel safe and supported during this very difficult time in the Twin Cities and across the country.

V. NUTRITION SERVICES UPDATE

Superintendent Gothard then invited Ms. Stacy Koppen, Director of Nutrition Services, to provide a brief update on the current work of Nutrition Services. She noted the focus on providing nutritious meals that are appealing and diverse, and meeting the needs of students. She went on to note that hot meals and cold meals are offered and focused in providing fresh fruits and vegetables, but unfortunately, not in the salad bar option due to guidelines from the MN Department of Health. All students are served in the tray line, including condiments, utensils and compostable clamshells to keep food safe and transportable, as students are eating in cafeterias, classrooms, and other non-traditional dining settings. She noted the cold meal option and “take-out” model for foods that will transport well or able to be taken home, including items that are packaged and shelf stable. Schools are able to determine which model works best for them. She also provided updates on the commitment to students, including curbside and home delivery options of meal boxes, which include recipes and cooking instructions. She also presented the cooler packs available for students, which are fully insulated to hold a week’s worth of meals to transport food safely. She also noted the feedback from students, and new ways to get nutritious foods to our students. There is steady participation levels and increases each week. We also expect to learn more from our secondary students upon their return to buildings. She also provided an update on the work from last March with curbside options and deliveries by bus drivers. She also noted a report on Nutrition Services staffing levels, as well as funding and the waiver to cover costs through September 2021 to allow us to continue to offer meals regardless of where they are consumed for no fee. A key marker of success is the 150,000 meals served each week, and increases in lunch, breakfast, and dinner. She also provided a recap on the plans for meals during the summer, and thanked staff within the Operations team for their collaboration. The creativity and innovativeness of the Nutrition Services team was also commended.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp thanked everyone for this work in feeding our students of SPPS and families across the city. She noted her pride in the focus on SPPS students and Saint Paul children as our children, and the strength of the community. Thanks for the innovative work, love and heart as we have shown incredible dedication for our community.
- Director Ellis noted that she requested this update to tell the community about the great work that is still happening and acknowledgment of the staff who consistently work to determine ways to best support our students, and thanked Ms. Koppen, bus drivers, and Nutrition Services staff. She noted her personal experience in delivering meals and to see the changes in food offerings.
- Are the insulated backpacks available for middle and high school students? Response: They are available for elementary and secondary students, and available curbside and at each building.
- How soon will delivery or availability start for summer schools? Response: We are offering delivery for those families who do not have access to curbside services, and hoping more families sign up for summer because we know it is so effective for students whose parents may be working, and the greatest barrier to break down is placing food on the doorsteps for families. There will be a week-long break after the end of school to get organized, and convert the freezer to a cooler.

- How many positions are open or flexible for folks who may be looking for summer work? Response: We continue to recruit, and are working with a temporary staffing agency. We are at 320 staff members, with a turnover of about 20% and it seems to keep up with the available workforce. The jobs are 10-month positions, and summer work is separate from the 10-month positions, and we are staffing summer opportunities and the goal is to place everyone into those summer positions.
- How will we be doing delivery for summer programming? Response: Thanks to Principal Kirk Morris at Como Park Senior High School who will be hosting home delivery for families. There will be meals for all students in buildings, and curbside services are also scheduled for drop-off and pick-up times at open buildings.
- Clarification was requested on site configurations for take-home meals. Response: Each principal was given the opportunity to determine what would work best for their site. Half of secondary schools are choosing the take-out model with cold meals, and the team is open to changes. It is about a 3-week lead time to make transition, but are open to those changes for schools.
- Director Foster thanked the team and how we each have a role in service to the children of SPPS, and that we put children and families first. Everyone plays a part and is essential to the space and environment. She thanked Ms. Koppen and Chief Turner. We are one community working together.
- Director Vue noted this is one of the essential services that public schools provide, and thanked the team for their work.

VI. UPDATE FROM REPRESENTATIVE BETTY MCCOLLUM

Superintendent Gothard then introduced United States Representative Betty McCollum, representative of the 4th Congressional District of Minnesota. He provided an overview on the committees on which she serves in Congress, and work in service to our schools, including resources to keep our schools safe during this time, and her instrumental work in four COVID rescue plans and the American Rescue Plan.

Representative McCollum then provided an update on how Congress is helping to re-open our schools. She provided an update on her recent talks with elected officials locally. She reflected on the COVID pandemic, including the loss of lives, jobs, and loss of former Board Chair Marny Xiong. She also noted the recent events in our state and country, and gratitude of service to board members. She then provided an update on collaboration to support our students and families, with help from the federal government. She also noted the continued safe practices regarding COVID and importance of vaccines. She noted the different experiences of our children this past year, and the suffering as well. She noted the work of House Democrats to support school staff in their work, and bills that have been signed into law that support vaccines, frontline workers, and schools, and American Rescue Plan.

She then provided more details on the American Rescue Plan, including to put children back in schools. She noted the funds available to the 4th District, and \$4.9B to the state of Minnesota, including \$500M to Saint Paul Public Schools, as well as funds for the City and Ramsey County. She provided more details on the funding and timing.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Superintendent Gothard thanked Representative McCollum and the importance of the American Rescue Plan for our schools, and the time and effort into that plan to be a historic time to do what was noted. On behalf of our students, staff, families, and community, thank you to Representative McCollum.
- Director Kopp thanked Representative McCollum as this has been a dynamic, challenging year. These funds are a great opportunity and one we will thoughtfully navigate to be good stewards for the

service of our students and families. She offered partnership and collaboration with our City, County, and State, and national legislatures to do this work for students and families.

- Director Ellis thanked Representative McCollum for her work in the American Rescue Plan, and acknowledgement of the loss of Marny Xiong. She noted the large funding numbers and how to support our students, and looking forward to partnerships, and wondering when and how to best have the continued dialogue. Response: Representative McCollum encouraged board members to contact her district office, as well as staff in Washington D.C., and staff and team assigned to educational work, including communications to community. Families want someone to help and to partner with them to prepare for the next school year.
- Director Brodrick noted maintenance of effort, and maintenance of equity, and a summer of healing. He thanked her for thinking of those things, and putting them into the space. He thanked her for all of her work since first elected in 2000.
- Director Allen noted that she is a founder of Black Lives Matter Twin Cities and activism around recent events, and thanked Representative McCollum for her work.
- Director Vue acknowledged that she acknowledged the challenges of our students and community, and this is an opportunity to put our students first and give them the support they need. He is proud to know she is working with us and putting students first with us.
- Director Foster thanked Representative McCollum, and it is emotional and personal, and want elected leaders to make it personal, and the amount of work in moving these funds to our community is monumental. On behalf of the state, she thanked her. She noted the scale of the level of doing this work, and speaking the voice of Minnesotans in education and racial disparities, and we need that leadership. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the state of education, and appreciate the collaborative tone and push that we are all in this together, and to support this work moving forward.
- Superintendent Gothard thanked Representative McCollum for her work and the update at tonight's meeting to the Board and Community.

VII. RAMSEY MIDDLE SCHOOL NAME CHANGE

Superintendent Gothard then invited Chief of Staff, Cedrick Baker, to introduce the presentation. He welcomed Principal Vibar, and reiterated to the Board that the process is still within the Procedures of Notice section for school name change. At the March Regular Meeting, Superintendent Gothard provided official notice of the work around the name change of Ramsey Middle School and the intent to move forward. Principal Vibar will begin plans to engage with the community and school and staff, and bring results back to the Board for a final action.

The presentation included a brief history on Alexander Ramsey, rationale for the school name change, and engagement and comments. Videos noted comments from students, as well as teachers on the proposed name change process. Details on the timeline were also provided, as well as next steps.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp thanked the team for their great presentation, and noted the board policy and appreciation for ideas generated within the community, as well as the students' thoughtful contributions. She also noted the name change will affect present students, as well as future students, educators and community members.
- What challenges does the team foresee and what kind of support is needed as we move forward? Response: We are currently working on community engagement, and in conversations with principals

of other SPPS schools who have undergone a school name change to learn from them and the obstacles they may have faced. We are fortunate that Ramsey has never been a high school with graduates, as past students may have difficulty in losing that namesake. We are also working to hear from the Saint Paul community and businesses around Ramsey, and finding contacts and reaching out to them. We also need to find a facilitator for the forum and to ensure that is a helpful and informative meeting, and open to hearing the positive and negative feedback from community members, and to ensure communications on the process occur throughout the city and that community members feel a part of the process.

- Director Kopp went on to note that the Office of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships could be a valuable resource, as well as speaking with district councils.
- Director Ellis thanked the students for their presentation and time. She also noted appreciation for the Ramsey teacher who noted that the history of Minnesota is learned in Minnesota Studies, and we are not erasing history, but students are still learning about it and finding ways for change.
- She also noted the current momentum and how to keep it going as students graduate from Ramsey and new students enter the school. Response: There are a lot of connection opportunities with Ramsey's feeder schools and the 5th grade classes, and hoping to be able to talk through transitions and the name change with classes. There is also a meeting on Friday to further discuss the process and gather name potentials from a variety of sources, and spreading the word to gather input.
- Director Foster also thanked students for their input and voices. This is a community process, and the Board's role is to listen to community and appreciates the work being done, and work ahead.
- Director Brodrick noted questions around community engagement and the timeline. He noted there will be folks who speak in opposition, and how will their voices be heard? Response: The Ramsey team, in collaboration with Chief Baker, will be working with Communications regularly to ensure the community is aware of the process. We want to ensure all are aware of the process, so that those who disagree, can still agree it was fair and felt communications were clear.
 - Director Brodrick also noted that community members will want to be aware of the process throughout, and ensure there is time to react and fairness within the process to ensure that all voices are heard. The ultimate action will come to the Board, and the Board needs to feel comfortable that the process ensured that all voices were heard as school name changes are emotional and controversial decisions, and need to have assurance that the process is going smoothly.
- Director Vue appreciates the opportunity for students to connect with incoming students to learn about the process and history, as well as the engagement and enrichment to learn about the community, city and bring folks together for this opportunity. He also noted questions on the timeline with Facilities, and if there is a rush in this work? Response: Principal Vibar is working with Facilities, and knows the estimated costs, and given the timing, there is not a concern to the timeline, but planning for the process to be complete within the next year or so.
- Superintendent Gothard noted this is a great experience for students to model the governmental process, and thanked Chief Baker for being the liaison to guide the process, and encouraged Ramsey staff and students, and community to reach out with questions.

VIII. SPPS ON-SITE UPDATE: SECONDARY IN-PERSON

Superintendent Gothard then noted the re-opening of grades 6-12 on April 14th to full in-person, and welcomed staff to present the SPPS On-Site Update for Secondary In-Person. Data on total number of students, and those opting for virtual were provided. Principals from Capitol Hill, Highland Park Middle, LEAP, and Central provided insights on their celebrations and challenges in re-opening.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp thanked staff for the presentation, and noted her personal experiences with the return to in-person learning. She also noted questions about what it looks like when a student or classroom does need to go into quarantine, and what learning looks like. Response: For students in both DL and in-person, it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure there is synchronous and asynchronous learning for students in DL at LEAP. There are TAs who help students in their native languages with questions they may have, and on Friday, teachers have office hours and are also available to help students.
- Director Ellis noted questions and clarification on the credit recovery model at Central. Response: Currently, there are about 325 students in credit recovery at Central - in the past, they would have gone to Gordon Parks to recover credits. When the opportunity arose to provide this opportunity at Central, we took advantage of it to provide supports to students with their 12 teachers in 15 classes. We want to continue to offer this opportunity to students on site for students who have built relationships with teachers offering the classes at all high schools across the district. This is a credit recovery model based on the needs of students and identified by principals. We are seeing the benefits in this type of model, both socially and emotionally, as well as academically to keep students on track to graduation.
 - SEAB Member Ali's earlier comments on supporting students before they need credit recovery was also noted.
 - Mr. Ginther also provided more details on the model, including that recovery is built into the school day. There is a group of teachers and principals who are working hard on the initial effort and continue to look on the redesign, and how to service students better. The ideas are homegrown by principals and teachers on how to ensure standards are met, while also aligned to grading, and will continue to evolve and innovate in ways to support students.
- Questions were also noted about when the Board will see these changes as part of the strategic plan. Administration will continue to give updates for these rapid adjustments. We know the importance of keeping students on track, beginning when they are freshmen, to graduate. We will also see it in the graduation data. Director Ellis also noted the importance of personalized learning in this work. Principal Vang also provided her experiences at Central.
- Director Brodrick wished all the students and staff good luck for tomorrow. It will be a big day for all of us.
- Director Vue requested information on the breakdown in ethnicity and race for students returning to in-person secondary, and requested that it be added to future presentations.
- He also requested feedback from parents and families on themes of concerns or challenges, and ways to address them. Response: Principals provided information on right-sizing classrooms, organizing furniture, hallway transition times, masks, communicating with families, and concerns around safety, which we want all students to feel safe and comfortable in our buildings. Another theme was support for virtual learners, and work of teachers to bring students in virtual learning into the classroom in different, creative, and innovative ways.
- Superintendent Gothard thanked principals and staff for their work to make these final nine weeks special. He also understands the challenges that remain and is in contact with other leaders in districts. He noted the vaccination rates. He is the happy for seniors to be back to experience their final year of high school.

IX. FY22 BUDGET UPDATE

Superintendent Gothard then noted, as described by Representative McCollum, that we continue to receive new information daily, and the new funding will factor into the FY22 budget. There is a lot that remains unanswered, but we continue to await the funds directed to SPPS and the State. There is also a state legislative session underway that is also a moving variable. We will continue to find time and space for questions, as we continue to learn more, both about the amounts and guidelines and plans for the future. He then welcomed Chief Financial Officer, Marie Schrul, to present information on the FY22 Budget Update.

Chief Schrul presented information on the continuation of priority-based budgeting for FY22, a review of the budget process, estimate review of the General Fund, confirm instructional and operational priorities, review of criteria for school and program allocations and estimate of costs in the General Fund, analyze savings options for the General Fund including realignment of existing investments to ESSER II and GEER I funding sources to support district stabilization and continuity of operations in schools and programs, prioritize investments to sustain or increase, prioritize new investments of the General Fund, proposed balanced budget of the General Fund, FY22 school and program budget allocation timeline, and strategies into practice and evaluation of results.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp thanked staff for the presentation. She noted questions on the changes from the General Fund to ESSER funds. Response: We are being strategic with these funds - if we didn't use those funds for those positions, that might mean others may need to fit within the General Fund. It's also important to remember that these funds are one-time only, and will work structurally to do what we can to see the long-term benefits.
- She also noted questions on allocations by enrollment. Response: We can provide allocations by team to show which positions do rely upon enrollment, which is mainly instructional staff in buildings, with principles, clerical, and other program-based depending on the contractual positions. Some schools also use discretionary funds to fund positions as well.
- Director Ellis requested more information on the amount of ESSER II funds not accounted for. Response: ESSER II allocations were a little over \$92M, as an estimate. Approximately \$26M will be budgeted from the General Fund to ESSER II. There are also other funding sources and are still waiting for guidance on those, such as the American Rescue Plan and federal aids, as well as Title I, and \$53M for special education. There are formula increases as well.
- She also requested further details on new investments as positions. Response: The new investments was an additional allocation to school with the aerospace program, to assist the schools with maintenance on flight simulators. Within school support services, these are additional supports around transportation costs, as well as MLL and Wellness. Other supporting positions included counselors and the new personalized learning program. Within district-wide support, one area of new investment was also risk management, with 2 FTEs to manage insurance and workers comp. Other areas include a position within HR, and additional funding for furniture replacement costs. Within Administration, there is a budgeted item for the lunch debt. Within SPPS Achieves, there are new initiatives around instructional priorities, and many relate to the expansions and well-rounded education areas and systemic equity and support positions, as well as college and career readiness, and medical career pathway. The other \$816,000 is part of the levy that correlated to the long-term facilities maintenance program, and integration funding.
- Director Brodrick requested further information on the timeline and opportunities for the Board to review further. It was noted that this is a high-level rollout, and over the next couple weeks, school

and program allocations will be provided as well as toolkits. At the May Committee of the Board meeting, there will be an opportunity to go through additional information, and each presentation will build upon this presentation, especially as we have more information, including staffing, feedback from schools, etc. for a final budget presentation in June, and action at the June Regular Meeting.

- Director Brodrick noted that when schools are notified of the budgets is when the Board will begin to hear from stakeholders, and the more information that can be provided to board members will be helpful. It was also noted we are in a time of flux and change, and alignment with SPPS Achieves, and also need to talk about maintenance of effort and maintenance of equity. Response: Our instructional priorities are based upon SPPS Achieves, and the budget process is based on SPPS Achieves, and that will be our guide for these additional federal funds as well.
- The federal funds were also discussed, and opportunities to engage with the Board and staff, for ideas and thoughts. It is important to remember that these funds are like a grant - they are one-time funding, and will need an on-ramp and off-ramp because these funds will last 3 years, and then decisions will need to be made to ensure the practices made can be sustained, and we'll need to go slow to go fast. Director Brodrick also encouraged the Superintendent to think about the summer of healing and to be a visionary as we come out of this pandemic. These federal funds will give us the opportunity to do things that may have taken longer, and will now have the resources, staff, equipment, curriculum, and tools. Chief Turner also provided more details on the alignment of SPPS Achieves, Envisions SPPS, and SPPS Builds. She noted the timeline of Envision SPPS and provided a brief update on the work of the workgroups. Superintendent Gothard noted the motto of WINN - what I need now as a guiding path for students, including in credit recovery. We need to focus on what students need every day, and our plans guide us.
- Director Vue requested background information on the shift to priority-based budgeting in the previous year. Response: In previous years, there was a shortfall, and we wanted to take a different approach to align the budget to the strategic plan priorities, and to have a multi-year budget plan to see into the future years and plan. Superintendent Gothard also elaborated on the focus area of Program Evaluation and Resource Allocation.
- Director Vue also requested information on the evaluation of effectiveness and priorities, and the goals and system to evaluate each year. Response: The long-term financial plan is to provide projected revenue and expenditure view out 5 years and give staffing and cost of maintenance of those program investments over time and what the district needs to strategically plan to maintain those investments.

X. POLICY UPDATE

Superintendent Gothard then invited Chief Baker to provide the Policy Update to two current policies:

- Update to Policy 510.01 Students: Retention and Promotion
- Update to Policy 812.00 School Emergency Management

The rationale for the changes to Policy 510.01 Students: Promotion and Retention were reviewed, as well as proposed updates.

As to the updated the Policy 812.00 School Emergency Management, the rationale for the changes was provided, as well as the proposed changes.

Links to the current policy, as well as drafts of the proposed policy were also included.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION: Update to Policy 510.01 Students: Retention and Promotion:

- Director Kopp requested further information on the program design. Response: The program design was intentionally left broad so it can be adaptive, and not need to be reviewed with each strategic plan. The plan was to allow it to have flexibility.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION: Update to Policy 812.00 School Emergency Management:

- Director Brodrick requested further information in a few areas. He requested details on lockdown versus lockout. Lockdown involves an issue inside the building - such as an unidentified person in the building or suspicious activity, whereas lockout involved issues outside the building - such as animals on the playground or police activity near the building. He also requested further clarification on the impact of this policy on the recent decision to discontinue the SRO contract with SPPD. He also noted questions on the accompanying procedure to this policy which would spell out exactly what administration and staff are to do during a situation. Each building has specific site plans. He also noted questions on if this policy will make students feel as safe as if SROs were still in the building.

MOTION: Director Vue moved approval that Policy 510.01: Students: Retention and Promotion, and Policy Policy 812.00 School Emergency Management move to the Three-Reading process, beginning with the First Reading at the April 20, 2021 Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Director Brodrick.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Kopp	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes
Director Foster	Absent
Director Brodrick	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Absent

X. ADJOURNMENT

Director Vue moved to adjourn the meeting; Director Brodrick and Director Ellis seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Kopp	Yes
Director Ellis	Yes
Director Foster	Absent
Director Brodrick	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Absent

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 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