

**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**

**February 9, 2021
4:30 p.m.**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

Board of Education: J. Vue, S. Marchese, J. Foster, J. Brodrick
Z. Ellis joined at 4:37 p.m.
J. Kopp joined at 4:38 p.m.

Absent: C. Allen

SEAB: S. Mulrooney

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

Vice Chair Vue also noted that as our students and staff have started to move back into buildings, The Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) Board of Education will also begin transitioning to in-person meetings at the Administration building. SPPS will also continue to conduct the meetings virtually as it has since the beginning of the pandemic. We would like to thank the community for your patience and grace as we navigated the previous regular meetings. We have learned a lot from the experience and will continue to learn more and adjust as we progress towards a less-restrictive meeting model.

Per Executive Order 20-81 and the Center for Disease and Control guidance - the mask mandate does require all individuals to wear masks in public indoor settings. Staff and board members will wear masks and social distance. In addition, signs instructing all persons to wear a face mask as required are made visible to anyone who enters each building in our district. Per Governor and the Minnesota Department of Health guidelines, one exception applies for face masks during a meeting when speaking or conducting business, such as governmental meetings that are subject to the Open Meeting Law (MN Statutes 2019, Chapter 13D). Board members may properly remove their mask when speaking (into their microphone), given that social distancing is always maintained, and then put them back on in a safe manner when not

speaking, just as state officials do at the Governor's meetings and other meetings with governing boards. We look forward to reconvening in person and commit to practicing the safest recommended measures.

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

IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Superintendent Gothard began the meeting by welcoming everyone, and provided an update on the local Ramsey County Covid-19 case rates, which continue to trend downwards. He also provided a brief update on reopening SPPS with our PreK-2 students who returned on February 1st, and we look forward to our 3-5 grade students returning on February 16th.

He also noted the next Family Forum is scheduled for this Thursday, February 11th, with the success of the previous Forum on January 27th. The 2/11 Family Forum is scheduled for 6:30-7:30 pm and will once again be moderated by William Moore from Ramsey County Public Health, and will feature real-time translations, and staff will be available to answer questions. He expressed deep gratitude to our students, staff, families, and community members for our prioritization of our youngest learners and moving forward together.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp noted that it is great to see students back in buildings, and the building of new routines with both students and staff. She noted that we are working hard to adapt, and seeing the smiling faces is a result of folks working together. She is grateful for the team and district leadership, and community partners who have stepped up to help.
- Director Marchese echoed appreciation, and the excitement of students and families to be back in our buildings. He noted the District is working hard to continue protocols that keep buildings safety in mind and at the forefront of our work. He also recognized that many families chose to continue in virtual learning. It is the work of the District to provide choices for families to choose which circumstances provide the best option and learning environment for their student, and is pleased to see those available. He thanked the parents, families, staff, and paraprofessionals and all who care for our students and want the best for them.
- Director Ellis thanked staff, and the transitions as we move back into buildings, including the changes to meal delivery and adjustments. She also noted seeing buses on the roads again, and seeing and hearing students on playgrounds. She also noted that while she appreciates the positive aspects, careful not to dismiss the long road ahead, and we need to continue to be concerned, careful, and thoughtful going forward. She echoes that we are not trying to do anything at the expense of

anyone, and want to do what is best for our students, and need to be careful and thoughtful about the health and well-being of folks who are in the building as well.

- Director Foster echoed her colleagues and a heartfelt thanks to the team - including teachers, staff, paraprofessionals, and parents. She noted to the community that the Board has received and read emails and messages about successes and challenges. We know there are challenges and continue to work through them with the team. She encouraged working with school buildings on concerns directly, and then check in with the Board in moving forward. It is a collaborative process in which staff and leadership and students are in buildings and spaces, building rituals and routines, and know the care and welfare of everyone is central. We made the decision in thinking about students first, and know we are working within the protocols to be safe while having needs met.
- SEAB Member Mulrooney thanked the District and staff, in this step towards normalcy, even if slow, but done well.
- Director Vue appreciates everyone in buildings who has shown up for students, and noted that this takes time and planning and there are a lot of moving parts in one direction to make it possible. He thanked the Superintendent and leadership to ensure teachers and staff have what they need to be successful.
- He did note a question on the official mode for students, parents, and staff to provide feedback as we move forward. Response: We will review the ways and attempt to gather feedback - it is not one-size-fits-all, and needs to be adaptive to meet the needs of the community. We have found email to be consistent and busy. There were surveys in the fall for readiness, and will consult with Communications and REA to follow-up on thoughts and formal data gathering.
- Superintendent Gothard thanked the Board for their support in moving this work forward.

V. SEAB UPDATE

SEAB Member Mulrooney provided an update on the work of SEAB, including revision of the SEAB Manual and framework, and recruitment, and engagement with the community and groups, including Know Your Rights training and Ethnic Studies. There will be updates to the website for recruitment, and noted that all SEAB members are seniors, and the need for an accelerated timeline.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp thanked SEAB for their outreach via email, and to share the good work and progress. As a member of the Board, she encouraged members to reach out for support from the Board needed to amplify, add to, or engage with their work further. We are all proud of SEAB's work and look forward to its continuation. If there are ways board members can help, please reach out. She is particularly impressed with the movement on the Know Your Rights training.
- Director Marchese thanked SEAB Member Mulrooney for the report, and is supportive of all their work and is glad to see work being done to increase and address updates to the manual, and active work on Know Your Rights. He knows it is a time of transition and looks forward to seeing us emerge on the other side, and thanked SEAB for their continued work.
- Director Ellis noted that it is hard to believe that all SEAB members are seniors, and that new members for next year will all be new. She appreciates what has been done this year, and while not as we imagined it to be, we are still continuing to determine ways to engage and support each other. She wishes them well for the remainder of the year, including in recruitment, and other parts of the process for the next iteration of SEAB.
- Director Foster also thanked SEAB for their work, and young scholar leadership to give students a platform to do great work, and will persevere like every part of the District. She encouraged SEAB members to reach out to board members to join their meetings and see their work.

- Director Vue thanked SEAB Member Mulrooney, and is encouraged to hear their work continue and move forward, and that members to thinking about the group once they have graduated and how the work continues. He also offered his help as a board member, and encouraged them to reach out.
- Superintendent Gothard also expressed his thanks, and encouraged SEAB to continue to reach out to all leadership, and they are here to help and to guide, and to hear student perspectives on how we can put forth the best efforts on behalf of all students and staff in the SPPS community.

VI. SPPS ON-SITE UPDATE

Superintendent Gothard then welcomed staff and principals to present information on the SPPS On-Site Update.

The first topic was Elementary PreK-2 and Specified Specialized Services Fully On-Site and an update on the return of students on February 1st. Data was also presented on total section, and total returning students, with disaggregated data on in-person and Virtual Learning school for students in K-5.

Principals from four elementary schools then shared their celebrations and challenges in the return to school buildings. An update on ECSE was also provided.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp noted listening to wonderful stories, and immense feelings of pride and acknowledgement of mixed emotions. She noted the credits in a movie and all the different departments and expertise - that's what this district is. She noted the Curby bus in ECSE. She also noted all that we are learning - students at home in DL and bringing to in-person; families learning to advocate with schools; educators and principals are solving problems; and will continue to see skills. Shared purpose and responsibility - work together with families to figure this out, and continue to do that going forward, it's a beautiful foundation. Thanks to everyone who is making this happen.
- Director Marchese noted that it is great to see and hear about the experiences of staff and folks in buildings, and principals modeling adaptive leadership, and honoring and realizing this is a tall order for everyone. He noted the creativity in adversity and sees that happening here in extraordinary times and staff are doing extraordinary things. Our families are making choices in what is in their best interest and need to honor that. He noted the principals' experiences discussed.
- Question about when we are in circumstance in buildings where staff feel to raise concerns in the building, are they first going to building leadership, and what is the protocol we ask them to follow? They sometimes appear in social media posts, which are not always helpful, and maybe on-site problem solving and mechanisms in place. Response: In a productive level of resolving concerns, our leaders are in that position and preparing for scenarios and talking about those with staff. We know each day is better than the previous, and will continue to get better. Each administrator has in context of adaptive leadership, and want staff to feel comfortable with the administrator to problem solve specifically. Our Health and Wellness team have done an amazing job. We need to be adaptive and responsive and staff feel comfortable reaching out to problem solve. We have a conscious, active commitment to ensure our sites are the healthiest and safest learning environments possible. We are looking at how to communicate that with staff to share concerns in a more efficient way.
- Suspect protocols that educated and trained staff and building administrators to use, and express hope that whatever happens, that our staff don't transmit their concerns to the students in their care.

The children and families who made the choice to be in the classroom are doing so because they believe it is the best for their family. Hoping there are not staff anxieties or concerns or resentment not bubbling up into the classroom - hope to continue to remain positive and align staff with the mixed emotions about being back in buildings, and also professional responsibility for the well-being of students, including elevating concerns when seen and modeling regulation we want to see from our students.

- Director Ellis noted that it was great to hear from our building leaders, and appreciation for what was shared.
- She also requested information on how staff meetings are being conducted and collaboration within school communities. Response: Principals in attendance noted that they continue their Tuesday staff meetings virtually, and staff voice concerns and work together to problem solve. PLCs are also conducted virtually, and in-person staff and virtual learning staff join to discuss matters in each learning environment.
 - Further questions centered on the alignment across buildings. Response: Principals from each school provided their perspective, including being in tune to the needs of staff, staff surveys, check-ins with staff on how they were feeling, suggestions for ways to improve safety and health concerns to make staff feel safer in buildings, discussion on curriculum and instructional needs within VLS and in-person and leveraging time with students in buildings, ongoing spaces for collaboration. Leadership is also looking to identify opportunities beyond regular virtual meetings to create space for ongoing collaboration. Paraprofessionals are also joining, either from working from home or at school, and 100% attendance from staff, including Reading Corps and Math Corps tutors - virtual meetings have made it possible for all to attend. The success of PLCs was noted, and cross-collaboration with all teams in ECSE. Other ways include the multiple modes of gathering feedback, including anonymous spreadsheets, survey check-ins, ad more formal and informal ways for staff to contribute feedback.
 - Further clarification was requested on the after-review of survey results, and included improved health and safety protocols such as hand sanitizer when walking into a room and out of a room, and professional development.
- Director Ellis also noted that in surveying families who have send their child back to in-person learning, and wondering if that feedback is collected as a district. Our families are looking at communication from the local school communities, and in collaborating with staff and listening to that, that will make a healthy community in our schools. As many opportunities as we can give to staff to do that, and will experience discomfort, but we are back in buildings. Expect that we will continue to hear challenges, and in that, there is also problem solving and doing things better, and doing all possible for our staff and students and families.
- Director Foster thanked the building leaders for sharing their experiences, and noted all staff who have played a part in our first days in reopening, including the building engineers and custodians, and teachers and staff, and the essential roles, and to continue to highlight and elevate to ensure all have the best experience.
- She also noted that in thinking about challenges, we have one of the most diverse districts in the state, and understanding language and being intentional about how messaging goes out to families, and to be flexible and adaptive and meeting parents and families for solutions for all. As we move forward, will continue to have challenges, but leaders to find solutions.
- She noted as early childhood educator by trade, and the perspective of adaptable in the moment and parents are trusting us and to be able to alleviate that stress, and thanks to educators to ensure families feel their children are safe in our buildings.

- She also noted that our students can do this and are smart and give them that credit, and adults are modeling that for them, and reminder of the brilliance in SPPS and allow students to determine solutions to problems. Happy to hear how that was working out.
- In ECSE and the curbside bus, and thinking about creative and adaptive ways for families and students, and staff. Continue to be proud, and challenged by challenges of today, but have a role in the success of that - the positivity is wonderful to hear, and understanding challenges and working together to solve them.
- Director Brodrick thanked the building principals for sharing their perspectives - it warmed his heart and gave confidence and hope.
- About the communication of staff concerns, thinking that staff are wondering about directive from the central office, and therefore, they follow protocol and go to principals, and wondering how comfortable and convey concerns to district office as quickly and possible so there is not a disconnect between staff in the classroom and the central office. Response: Examples were shared, including the COVID decision tree and working with Wellness, and the trust in the team in knowing who to contact. At the building level, it is the building engineers and nutrition services with questions, and ensuring those can be answered in a timely way and working with Wellness, and feeling support and receiving answers. Another is that throughout the process the District has sent messages to staff, and about communication, which helped - schools need to clarify with help from assistant superintendents, Wellness, and answers from staff in terms of the cafeteria. Communication has been amazing and well-coordinated and avenues for clarification. The heavy lifting was by the central office, and the schools clarify from their local perspectives.
- SEAB Member Mulrooney echoed the comments of the board members, and while there are challenges, but overall has been a good start and promising to deal with challenges, and that each day is better than the last, and to keep that going for in-person learning.
- Director Vue echoed his colleagues, and is encouraged to hear how the first weeks went, and glad to hear about communications and collaboration in buildings, taking feedback and putting actions in place to ensure all are being heard and practices in place for a successful experience in buildings.
- He also noted questions around steps to ensure students in VLS and in-person are not receiving two different kinds of education based on the location and mode. Response: We don't believe so. One piece we are cognizant of is the idea that families are opting into VLS and need to do the best job possible to engage them and provide a premier education for all students. Some of the strategies heard are just that - in bringing teachers together, and idea of having conversation about collaboration and shared resources. VLS teachers are part of the instructional team - the platform is different for the delivery model, but teachers are still posting lessons. We are continuing to have teachers work in similar fashion, and feedback from parents, and formative assessments and data around that. Some of the exciting things we have learned is how we do learning, and increased comfort in technology and supporting lessons. Believe in level of professionalism and responsibility of teachers to rise to the occasion, and conversations facilitated by principals about collaboration and data to support the student. It will be an evolving conversation, and excited about the feedback from sites, and great prompt to determine engagement from families and their needs and opportunities for that. Principals also shared their thoughts, including continued PLCs, school schedules for both VLS and in-person, a repository of lessons, guiding questions on opportunities for collaboration, immersion opportunities, and creative ways to problem solve, as well as lessons that students have gained during this time, including in technology and advocacy, and how to leverage those skills to bring back to buildings.
- Superintendent Gothard thanked staff and the Board, and recapped the timeline from March 2020, noting the execution of a complicated plan, working cross-departmentally, communication, and valuing the leadership in the District. SPPS has risen to the challenge and is beyond proud of this

community and will continue to have challenges and will continue to work through them together just as we have since March 15th.

VII. FIVE-YEAR FACILITIES PLAN: FY2022-2026

Superintendent Gothard then welcomes staff to present the introduction to SPPS Builds, and the FY22-26 five-year implementation plan for improvements to SPPS facilities, including background, priorities, and funding structure. Topics for this meeting include the review of criteria for prioritization, SPPS Builds plan, and completed and current capital projects. Future meeting topics will include the five-year plan, funding, and action on proposed projects.

Staff then reviewed the criteria for prioritization, including what informs the criteria, alignment to the strategic plan, and vision, principles, and standards including around general learning spaces, specialized lab/studio space, space for enriching activities, safety, and food service and dining. Quantitative assessments were also reviewed, as well as facility alignment assessment, and facility condition assessment. Use and utilization were also reviewed. Criteria for prioritization was also reviewed, and the dashboard for every building's alignment.

Within the SPPS Builds portion of the presentation, the five-year plan was reviewed, including alignment with the strategic plan and flexibility to accommodate Envision SPPS. A rough order of magnitude estimating was presented; a renovate versus replace analysis; BOE gate-checks; and the interactive dashboard.

Within completed and current capital projects, the projects completed include major additions and remodels. Since 2017, completed projects include E-STEM purchase, Adams, Como Park Senior, Global Arts Plus Upper and Lower, Highland Park Elementary, Horace Mann Elementary, Humboldt Senior, Johnson Senior, RiverEast, and Saint Anthony Park Elementary. Photos of each project were then shared.

Smaller projects were also reviewed, including Jie Ming Phase 1 remodeling, flooring at Maxfield Elementary, roofing at Dayton's Bluff, LEAP, and Hubbs, window replacements at Journeys, playgrounds, and boilers.

Completed athletic improvement projects were also shared, including an investment of \$8 million over 3 years at 8 sites including Como Park Senior, Central, Harding, Highland Complex, Humboldt, Johnson Senior, LEAP, and Washington Tech. Work completed and underway was also shared.

Current projects include additions and remodels at American Indian Magnet, Education and Operations Services (DSF/1930 Como), Frost Lake Elementary; athletics at Washington Tech; assisting and infrastructure preservation at Johnson Senior, Phalen Lake, Saint Paul Music, and Highland Complex.

The Annual Use and Utilization Report was also included, as well as the report of SPPS Facilities Condition and Facilities Master Plan: Criteria for the Prioritization of Facility Improvements to Create 21st Century Schools for SPPS, and report on Projected Costs - Modifications to Estimating and Budgeting.

Full presentation and reports can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION PART 1:

- Director Brodrick requested information on the committee that worked on the original FMP. How long has it been since that committee met, and are those decisions made then still viable? Response: It has been about 2 years due to the start of the external review process, and COVID. Hope to restructure the engagement and become more comprehensive as it aligns with Envision SPPS.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION PART 2:

- Director Kopp thanked staff for the opportunity to walk through the plan previously. She also appreciates the increase for public transparency, and that schools are personal for folks, and they love and care about their past, present, and future with engagement, and alignment with the strategic plan for efficient and effective use of building spaces for our learners.
- Director Marchese thanked staff for the rubric. He noted questions about replacement costs versus rebuild, and a few considerations, and how that is reflected in the qualitative and quantitative way. Response: The analysis will be somewhat similar to AIM. To give examples, if the long-term financial prudence shows we would be patching something that would need additional work later would be a consideration - how solid is the building and improvements. Social/cultural/economic impacts are also considered. Structurally the conversation is now explicit and early and part of the initial charter, for a community conversation for all to see kinds of decisions and metrics placed into that and an overt part of those conversation.
 - That is important to foreground about initial planning process. Have heard from other presentations, there is a discussion around retrofitting, and extent to which the existing building is a “sunk cost”. Liken it to conversation around vehicles and more ecologically sound to have a new electric vehicle that may be more expensive, but lower operating costs. It’s important to be upfront about tradeoffs. There is sentimental attachment to current buildings, and when they change, folks have strong opinions, and that is an intangible and informed by conversation about best interest of students for now and in the future - that’s who we are building for and their needs, and for the rubric to be a driver and alignment with strategic plan, and Envision SPPS to improve the process going-forward.
- Director Vue noted questions around the interactive dashboard. Response: The dashboard interactivity will be for person viewing it to click on individual portions to learn more about a specific school, and the data behind it, and more informational tool that allows the user to be involved. The dashboard was a big part of the desire to be transparent about the ongoing efforts at buildings, how building was chosen and feel within priority ranking, why it was chosen, and alignment with funding and financing and alignment with timing and budget. It is commitment to public and on-stop-shop to learn more about a building’s capital progress.
 - Great tool and synthesizes all we are talking about for a visual marker of the progress as to the plan. Think this dashboard could be used in different aspects as well for the success of the FMP.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION PART 3:

- Director Kopp thanked staff for the tour of this beautiful work and makes her proud of SPPS and testament to the design for welcoming spaces, with lots of schools looking forward to their changes. Both projects teams are very happy to take board members on tours of the sites.
- Director Marchese noted the list and started on the Board in 2016 with the FMP and the places and spaces have been renovated and pleased to see the changes and building improvements. We are trying to keep a hold of fact that we are creating learning spaces our staff and students deserve. He noted the dramatic changes of Adams and Saint Anthony Park. The end product is important, and when talking in community and decisions, to keep that front and center. In conversations going forward, to build support to show what the changes will be - once folks see the buildings, they are glad that this investment was made in the future of our kids and city, and that is important. We are

engaged in one of the biggest building projects of any municipality in this county. Response: All projects and spaces completed are living in the 21st century, and ensuring that in analyzing remodel versus new that the end product takes us to 21st century and responds to the current needs.

- Director Ellis noted the photos and having been in each of the buildings and toured the sites. She noted a couple thoughts - it was the process of how we got here, and trying to ensure that is something that is more understandable to the community and process for the Board to make these decisions. It was amazing to remember Humboldt as a high school student, and to see it now. This is not only transformative for the district, but the community as well, and making impacts and changes into the community as a whole. Appreciate work done, and hope that going forward in deciding remodel versus build new, is that where we are is not where we have been, and the decisions going forward may be for less students and hope of more, and who we are building for and how we are building, and decisions around what needs to be here and building for the future of SPPS. Proud of this work, and going with SPPS Builds, will not apologize for spaces because our students deserve them, but needs a better process.
- Director Foster encouraged her colleagues to talk to students and staff in remodeled buildings, and changed perspectives or engagement. Echo that we are making these decisions for students and staff to have world-class education, and doing it fiscally resonabisbally and transparent for our community and taxpayers.
- Director Brodrick noted that he is the only current member of the Board who was a part of the initial FMP process in April 2014. He cannot express the degree of excitement as SPPS embarked on this gigantic step towards facilities equity for our inner-city students. Many have heard him talk about this, but personally and what we all want for kids who live in Saint Paul and question of equity. He recounted his personal and professional connections to SPPS. He could not have been more happy in April 2014 when we declared we were going to make our school district in terms of infrastructure what it should be - that move was long overdue and want to state that administration and staff showed incredible boldness and righteousness. Unfortunately many plans went awry in following years, and found ourselves being questioned by the media, and by our stakeholders and the public, and there was mistrust magnified. Needless to say, that in the Fall of 2019, we were forced to do what was embarrassing for any organization - to convene a 3rd party external team to review our process and work on the FMP, and this launched a sad time for SPPS. He will be leaving this Board in December, and one of his greatest fears is that the Board in 2022 and beyond will have to endure again the questioning and lack of faith as in 2018. It was a tough year for SPPS and the Board and Superintendent. He will submit a comprehensive list of questions to Administration.
- How much the 3rd party review team was utilized in creating the new FMP plan, in particular with the consultant Jacobs firm? How have we used the expertise of Jacobs, and will we continue to use it? Response: We are fortunate that the work able to do with the external review team, and learned a lot of things that we presented tonight and implemented into the plan. Last spring, around the gate checks and were part of the plan. Each slide - there are at least 5 recommendations that were suggested by the external review team, and as a whole, presented to be more transparent and bringing forth for all board members to view, and provided full disclosure of all review, qualitative and quantitative review given to the Board and in the packet. All shared should be done in public format and will continue to do so. Also asked for an improved process to be able to remind the Board and public about projects to be presented, how to pay for them, and in line with timeline and budget - that too was part of it. The gate point checks were a direct recommendation from the review team, and master planning process reviewed, and will be conducted over the next few meetings with SPPS Builds program and action by the Board. The SPPS Builds gate checks and examples were also reviewed in detail, including master planning and project charter, and in line with budgets - for each review, the Board will have opportunity to see the budget to the project and plan and how we are on

track. The other recommendation is accountability - to the Board, community, and each other, and that is what we are planning for transparency for the dashboard, which was also a recommendation for the community to learn about the projects, funding, timeline, and budget, which will be interactive and real-time dashboard. We will commit to bringing back in March COB the number of recommendations the review team did bring forth - almost 30-40 recommendation and well on the way to meet those recommendations. Also highlight the updates to the school board on the progress updates was a recommendation, and are also posted on the website. The updates will contain similar information on each project site and dashboard. The external review process, and it was about learn, adjust, and continue. We have learned a great deal since that review and before; we have made adjustments, and help to continue and bring forth recommendations. Feel confident that we have achieved a great deal from external review, learn, make adjustments, and have process to continue. It becomes a good cycle to learn and adjust as we go, while being transparent, and ensure the Board is comfortable with decisions and to hold Administration accountable.

- There was clarification requested to wait until March for the specific questions on the future of the FMP. Do want to emphasize that during those “dark times”, this Board was accused of demonstrating poor governance and lack of oversight, and the kinds of things talking about, think we need to ensure when Administration makes those explanations to the Board, and many things are very difficult for the public to understand, and board members to understand. He wants to ensure communication between Administration and the Board is clear, so that no Board again is accused of poor governance and lack of oversight. All on this Board want to feel well-informed on this process as we move along. This is a long-range endeavor, but crusade for inner-city kids to have the kinds of facilities, or comparable, to those of the suburbs and private schools. We want what is best for our students - but also not fall into the same pitfalls as a few years ago.
- SEAB Member Mulrooney noted process over the scope of this project, and entire process of building procedures. As alluded to, the District is looking to improve engagement and transparency for better understanding. From his experience, urge the Administration to improve engagement with the active student body, and in the interest of more public engagement and around school improvement, the Administration makes concerted effort to reach out to students in more active ways.
- Director Vue noted questions around the upgraded schools, and the scope of the Facilities team - in both maintaining current buildings and renovate or replacing buildings. Are we giving forethought to putting the same amount of effort to maintain older buildings as we are to newer buildings? Not want two sides of the District. Information on the scope of cross-collaboration between maintaining District as a whole? Response: The perspective of short-term stewards of long-term assets of the organizations and about how to take longview to make meaningful progress on all buildings, and example around facility condition assessment and tracking how they are doing and effects of decisions both small and large. It is a balance and things are large and expensive, and be nimble in addressing them. We have created self-performing crews to do maintenance to improve the quality of the buildings, and internal staff to ensure there is a quality portfolio across our buildings. We spend time navigating the funding sources for facilities, and our goal is to ensure they work in tandem, and to understand the process to give the best learning environment for all students. A lot of communities are excited for their projects, and recognize our portfolio is \$2.7B of construction, and manage our resources as efficiently as we can. We are always trying to be thoughtful across our team, and balance between day-to-day operations and large scale capital projects. Also helpful is that with the buildings shared earlier, we don't forget about buildings that are not being renovated and continue to maintain them, including windows, roofs, flooring, and minor updates. We have good, sounds buidlings, even with the average year built in 1950s, our buildings are strong, sound and structurally sound because they are maintained, and will discuss further on the funding for long-term maintenance and continuing to ensure that we have high-quality older buildings as well. It is

masterfully done to ensure we continue to renovate and maintain and align resources and funding - each funding source has restrictions, and work with Baker Tilly and Finance to align projects.

- Superintendent Gothard thanked members of the team and for their work to continue moving us forward. He encouraged board members to ask questions early and to help bring forward relevant and timely information, and sequence to this work with the funding sources.

VIII. FY22 BUDGET GUIDELINES

Superintendent Gothard then welcomed Marie Schrul, Chief Financial Officer, to present on the FY22 Budget Guidelines.

The SPPS Achieves strategic plan sets goals for student achievement, guides decision-making and focuses efforts on long-term student outcomes. The Proposed Budget will be guided by the District's strategic plan. The strategic plan establishes the District's instructional priorities. The budget documents how resources will be allocated to support those priorities and the District's mission to inspire students to think critically, pursue their dreams, and change the world. The instructional priorities for 2021-22 were also reviewed including the focus areas and strategic investments, including Systemic Equity, Positive School and District Culture, Effective and Culturally Responsive Instruction, and College and Career Paths. The role of strategic investments within the long-term student outcomes was also shared.

Information on preparing the budget calculations was also reviewed, including the budget model, and that the District will utilize a priority-based budgeting method. Additional information included review projections, expenditure projections, enrollment, average salary and benefits calculator data, fund balance and information for school allocations, and non-school programs.

The structure for compiling and presenting the 21-22 Budget was also shared, including instructional priorities, stakeholder input, presentation format, fully financed budgets, other resources allocated to schools, and the adopted budget.

The full report can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp noted the previous budget engagement session where it was a community forum and the drawing of describing the budget process, and opportunity to learn about priority-based budgeting. What are the opportunities for the community to understand the guidelines and priority-based budgeting? Response: We are continuing to refine those opportunities with the planning team, and will provide more details on the opportunities and can add to the presentation for the budget.
 - In the virtual environment, there might be more opportunities and community engagement for learning.
- Director Marchese thanked Chief Schrul for the guidelines, and pleased to see us moving forward with the priority-based budgeting process, and the effects of COVID on that last year, and we can adapt to the reality we have.
- What will the impact of the federal and state funding if we think out to the next fiscal year, and how do we factor into revenue and expenditures? Example of summer learning, and think of resources to do that. Response: We have been living the CARES funding for almost a year and is very close with rules and regulations around the funding, and some of the guidance around the next wave of funding also has some requirements around accountability for the funding. The requests that have been

coming from different academic and operations areas for needs through June and into the future focus on the student learners and creative ways around meeting student needs. We are building a six-month plan and a year out, and embed that \$22M received in ESSER Part 1 funding, and future allocation which we are waiting on a final certification of amount and guidance. That final allocation will be built into the budgeting process, but right now, collecting information from the different departments to embed side by side with general fund and other funding sources to supplement what we may need to add in to continue supporting in our regular operations and on top of COVID. It is a challenge because there is a lot of reporting requirements, but have a team to cohesively do that with. It is working together and understanding what we need to do for our students, and ensuring their needs are met. That is high on our priority list and phasing in different areas as we go. There is not one budget model or plan - we have multiple plans with scenarios in our system, even with enrollment, and having Plan B and C to look. The CARES funding will be a substantial amount and will be a one-time fund, and used for specific efforts for added equipment, technology, etc. For us, we need to think creatively and strategically to use funds over time. In these one-time funds and for a purpose, and it works, but funding is not sustainable, including positions to provide services, and then the one-time funding goes away and need to think carefully to bring on systems of support to understand short, medium and long-term impacts to budget.

- For one-time funding, part of the difficulty is that it goes away, and positions go away and the initiative. Appreciation of thinking about sustainability, and wondering if using the funding to provide impulse funding to structural or strategic change, that doesn't necessarily require long term investments, as much as changes in practice or one-time costs to then use recurring value - like technology, and then change practice to align. Also think that it is for more short-term needs to address now or in near future - a lot of discussion is around summer learning and costs involved as a recovery mechanism to extend instruction and how to fund that isn't to make a recurring program, but learn from it, and address what we are dealing with right now. Response: Within the instructional priorities, accelerating and around summer planning and helping with interrupted learning and teaching, and accelerating full implementation of PreK math model and literacy model, and evidence brought forth to struggle to all students to read by 3rd grade and in math. If we can invest there through backward mapping, and likely to reach long-term student outcomes. The other area is around identifying and implementing solutions to secondary scheduling and credit, and very specific and if we can change the structure for pieces in place with a team, and not to be long-term staffing costs, but different ways.
- It will be beneficial to the Board to hear more about those changes and the funding for them
- Director Vue noted questions in planning for FY2022, and the start of FY2021 - curious to know what we've learned from the previous year's budgeting, and what is carried forward to the next budget, and recommendations? Response: This has been an odd year, and for anything, we can't look at the trend of last year to be the baseline, but look at a couple years back and really for enrollment, we as a District, need to be strategic in how we are projecting and going forward while looking ahead and embracing opportunities we have with online and virtual opportunities. This District is well placed at embracing different opportunities for students, especially with partnerships. From revenue, think the District has some different opportunities for being able to utilize some of the CARES funding to help put in place supports and know they are on-time only but an opportunity to improve this District in what we do over time, and refine our process, and also at opportunities with priorities and investments, and to see if some of them need to change and the role of our Academics team, and where outcomes and metrics come in. The goal of priority-based budgeting to look at priorities and strategic plan and invest where to provide outcomes and put District in place to serve our students and families, and also putting into place fiscal health - those are the goals that we strive to achieve, and believe in the strategic plan and support those efforts around students and families.

- Superintendent Gothard noted this is the beginning of the budget process, and part of the cycle always moving, and will be bringing forth in a regular way the formation of the FY22 budget. It will be an odd/strange year, waiting for final CARES amount, and goes through 2022-23 school year, and there is a long-term plan with that with such a short window. There is also a legislative session, and the Governor has proposed some of the state holdback CARES funding to fund summer learning as well, and encouraged board member to listen to legislative remarks around “hold harmless” to be contingent of the legislative session and revenue for SPPS - there is a lot of information from the federal government and a state biennium budget.
- Director Ellis also requested clarity on summer school and summer learning. There is talk of funding for summer, and summer school before, and possibility of summer school going-forward, there would be a different focus on summer learning? Because some of the money is one-time funding, and the following summer would potentially be different, and how would funding and staffing work? Response: We will continue to operate summer programs as possible, and be able to offer what we have in the past, but also intense, accelerant programs to pinpoint areas determined are those delayed or subject to pandemic on student growth and address in different ways. We may need more credit recovery opportunities for students, and plan based on the past, and will look different. There is a large group reimagining summer learning, and it is looking at how to to meet guideposts, but also investments in acceleration, and hearing form parents demanding safer, more equitable learning experiences this summer, investment in tutoring to reduce the student:teacher ratio, and also looking at partners at the City and broader partners interested in being alongside us, while offering engagement opportunities and ways to bring students together - enrichment and accelerated learning. It's an opportunity to bring a well-laid out plan - this group is actively meeting to do something remarkable for students and families. We also monitor the funding with the opportunity to generate ALC revenue, with a challenge last year, and where supplemental CARES funding to support programming and also ways to report and generate potential ALC learner hours for the summer program.

IX. POLICY UPDATE

Superintendent Gothard then welcomed Cedrick Baker, Chief of Staff, and Darren Ginther, Director of College and Career Readiness to present information on a proposed new policy regarding Weighted Grades.

The rationale for the creation of this policy was reviewed, including that it is due to requirements by state statute: ““A school board must adopt a policy regarding weighted grade point averages for any high school or dual enrollment course. The policy must state whether the district offers weighted grades. A school board must annually publish on its website a list of courses for which a student may earn a weighted grade.” Historically, SPPS has practiced weighted grades, and now, we need a policy to reflect as such to be in compliance with Minnesota statute.

The general statement of the policy was also reviewed, which includes that SPPS encourages all students to take rigorous coursework; SPPS does employ a weighted grade practice; weighted grades apply to any college level equivalent course; the grade point average for any grade awarded in any weighted course will be multiplied by a factor of 1.25; and practice around credits previously earned by students who transfer enrollment to SPPS.

The proposed policy was also reviewed.

The full presentation and draft policy can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp requested information on if this policy changes anything fundamentally for students or families? Response: It does not change anything - weighted grades have been in place for a number of years, and this is the formalization of this practice, and what it means to be a rigorous course. This is formalization of current practice to meet state statute.
- She noted the encouragement of students to take rigorous and advanced courses, and heard expressed that not all students have been encouraged, and hoped that more students are encouraged to take those opportunities and courses.
- Director Marchese noted that this is to meet statute, but also thing to work on substantively is increasing enrollment in advanced course by a broader base of students, and have as an agenda item for the strategic plan, and to the extent to formalize and encouragement to make outreach and address disparities of who is enrolled in our courses as well.
- Director Foster noted some language questions in Section A for the change from “expected” to “encouraged” and that as it is written, we are putting onus on students, and we need to be providing rigorous content to all students already. When looking at this, think we need consistency in what we are providing - that is the expectation, whether in IB or core classes. Question the language in this. Response: We have had conversations and discussed internally, and also that language was somewhat intentional for that potential change and language. We did engage our building principals on language on this policy and feedback. Within this policy if using “expects” and IB and AP with external requirements, it becomes challenging to expect a student to take those courses. With this proposed language revision, it could be a teacher, counselor, a support staff working with student and family providing options and encouragement to enroll, and allowing student and family to make the best decision for their education, and access and success to advanced courses. Within this policy, it is mentioning weighted grades, and do see peice of all coursework should be challenging and rigorous.
- Want to be able to say and own that SPPS provides rigorous and challenging coursework for all students. Response: Hear the positive pressure through personalized learning plans, and success to build upon - under Mr. Ginther within that success rates for African-Amrican students participating in dual credit programming have completion rates of over 90%, and within Gateway to College to see Black, Brown and ELL students attending and completing college credit at rates higher than their peers.
- Director Foster reiterated that words matter and how they transcend through cultures in our district.
- Director Brodrick responded to Director Foster’s remarks that words do matter, and the Board owns this policy, and if there are members of the Board who think we may need to do more wordsmithing prior to the final reading of this policy, we could do that, and the process for that and timeline. The point around words matter, which is so important, and words of the Board. Response: The Board does create policy and wants the Board to be comfortable with language - anytime during the three-reading process, there can be changes and presented during a regular meeting. Also ensure loop in Mr. Ginther to provide information on this language for the decision.
- It sounds like there is a desire to do wordsmithing, and ensure information on detailed information on the why for this policy language and feedback from building administrators, and then move forward with wordsmithing.
- Further discussion on the timeline and allowance for changes during the three-reading process.
- Director Vue noted questions on the context for the arrival to this policy and factors for this policy. Response: This proposed policy has been discussed in the POlICY Work Group, and concerns on timing and COVID and uncertainty, and location on the priority list. We would like to ensure that we

are in accordance with state statute, and it aligns with the new school year. With the team and from board colleagues, felt now was a good time to move forward with this policy, and need to continue to keep policy revisions moving forward, and in alignment with decisions by the Board on other matters as well. This aligns to different work in policy and not, class rank, with SEAB work in advanced coursework, rigorous course waivers, and a lot of work happening and to streamline to the pieces in access and success to be proportionality with population in SPPS and continue to streamline and analyze courses set up align with proportionality in courses that students can access.

- Superintendent Gothard noted the plan to bring this forward at the next board meeting, and at the discretion of the Board to make changes to the policy.

MOTION: Director Vue moved to approve moving this proposed policy to the three-reading process, beginning with the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education on February 23, 2021. The motion was seconded by Director Brodrick.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

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

X. ADJOURNMENT

- Director Marchese acknowledged this was the first Committee of the Board meeting facilitated by Vice Chair Vue, and the successful navigation of the meeting. Director Ellis echoed her colleague.
- Director Foster thanked everyone for presenting, and praise to our SEAB team for their work in advanced courses, and Mr. Ginther has been a champion of this work. She thanked Vice Chair Vue for the facilitation of the meeting.
- Director Brodrick noted he is proud to be a member of this team.
- Vice Chair Vue thanked SEAB Member Mulrooney for his attendance.
- Superintendent Gothard thanked everyone for the continued support, and working in the present, but looking forward to the future as well. Thanks on behalf of all staff, and great to hear the school reports, and support of the work is appreciated.

Director Vue moved to adjourn the meeting; Director Foster seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:17 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