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

December 8, 2020
4:30 p.m.

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

Board of Education:	J. Kopp, S. Marchese, Z. Ellis, J. Foster, J. Brodrick, J. Vue C. Allen arrived at 4:33 p.m.
SEAB:	K. Ali
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

III. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA

MOTION: Director Foster moved approval of the Order of the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Marchese.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

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

IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Gothard began by welcoming everyone to the meeting. He noted the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic and current case rates, and a brief update on vaccinations, and the plan to deliver

them to essential employees. While there is a not a date for education staff, the process has started. By Spring, we should be well on the way to be in a place where our community can obtain the vaccine. We are shifting to vaccination, and what a school district and community looks like with a vaccination, and barriers to continue to talk about the importance for health, safety and life of our community members. It's an important time for us and continue to learn and grow, and will impact our treasured stakeholders in SPPS.

He also noted that our SEAB student Kalid Ali was matched as part of the QuestBridge match program with Macalester College. He is going to be attending Mac, and is a select group of students who will be matched with a university. This program partners with nationally recognized colleges, and they truly look for students such as Kalid who are achieving at incredible rates in times of adversity, and need support. It is both a reward for Kalid, and a reward for Mac and our community. To know they have welcomed him and that he will be learning in our community and continue to grow, and give back to this great community. We are so proud, and know Kalid's family is also proud.

SEAB Member Ali then shared more about QuestBridge, including attending college at no cost for four years. He noted his experience in the college application process.

Board members congratulated SEAB Member Ali and encouraged him to reach out to board members throughout college and into the future. He has the support of SPPS and the community as he attends Macalester. So glad that he will be in Saint Paul to grow, and SPPS is a family and we are here for him. It is a recognition of all he has brought in and done so far, and so well deserved, and pleased for him, the community and his family. We are excited and proud and look forward to great things. Congratulations and thanks to Macalester, and he brings heart and honesty to items. Wish joy and success as he moved forward in his education.

V. 2021 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Superintendent Gothard then introduced Mary Gilbert, Legislative Liaison, to provide an update on the 2121 Legislative Agenda. He noted engagement in AMSD, MSBA and CGCS and compiling our priorities and be able to share them as one voice.

Topics discussed included a session preview and agenda items of:

- Stabilize Education Funding— Covid, General Education/Categorical and Special Education
- Increase diversity of teacher workforce
- Enhance local control and reduce mandates to improve outcomes
- Provide resources for child and family stability and support

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- **D**irector Allen thanks Ms. Gilbert for the presentation.
- With SUTR and making it affordable for the bachelor's program, and by making it affordable, are we going to use the same standards as the licensure program, or other implementations? Response: We are in the process of submitting a grant with a higher education organization. One option is the Dougherty School at the University of Saint Thomas, which provides benefits to our students. Before they get to Dougherty though, we try to have students enroll in College in the Schools courses in high school to earn both high school and college credit. There is also funds allotted to CIS programs in

high schools, for classes such as Intro to Teaching. It is time and money. The goal is to shorten the duration of hours in college for students with CIS courses and then to Dougherty School, thereby reducing the number of hours, credits, and time in a school. They are also looking at working with other foundation partners to offset the cost of tuition or off an internship that might be available during the student-teacher period.

- Discussion around licensure and underground programs. Response: It would be more of an internship in bachelor's program. The difference is that SUTR candidates are already employees in the district and they can't do the full-time job as SUTR, and taking classes during the summer, and full time position with master teacher Monday-Thursday and meet with their cohort on Friday. For SUTR, candidates are making a sacrifice in pay ,but do provide a stipend and pay their health insurance. It will be slightly different, but same spirit to look at partners and time to reduce student debt, and provide internship payment to offset their expenses. We will also have them apply for any and all grant programs through the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and then wrap other sources around to keep barriers and cost down.
- Suggestion to pay for medical insurance and benefits for the entire family, as that was identified as a barrier and concerns of some paraprofessionals - the pay cut and their families would no longer qualify for benefits.. Response: Will look into it and possible MN Care is an option for those families as well.
- Board members thanked Ms. Gilbert for the presentation and information.
- There are a lot of moving pieces in our legislative agenda, and great job of keeping apprised before and during session.
- MDE had a school funding task force, and what are the overlays of that report drafted by the working group, and about our funding formulas, SPED funding, and specifics in our agenda that might dovetail with the report. Response: There were several recommendations that were very expensive, and our general funding information - funding formulas have not kept up with inflation or property value, and has created inequities between districts. In putting together the agenda, taking principles used on general education moving forward with inflation, examining property tax differences and sustainability. Special education recommendations were fully included. The PreK recommendation was to go even further, to consider all students eligible for FRL, or universal. Given the deficit, and shore-up 266 seats first, and knowing in the Senate they would like to put funds into scholarships. Trying to be pragmatic and put in place that if a formula moved in that direction, use all principals from the formula, and goal to catch up with inflation, fund the biggest areas of cross subsidy in SPED and EL ($70M combined), and add the 266 PreK seats. Those are big items. Will have all in place, so with the vaccine and economy coming back, the forecast may change and have pieces in place, including with inflation and funding those changes. There are ways to implement changes in formulas that are easier to do because we don't need to pay for them in a year with a deficit.
- Also important to elevate the principles in terms of lack of keeping with inflation, inequities, and cross-subsidy.
- We belong to AMSD and MSBA, and there will be some congruence in organization in common lobbying priorities given the fiscal situation of the state and make sense to go out together. Response: We all do better when we all work together. We have met to discuss that, including what is needed regarding COVID, and move forward the smartest way with things built into the forecast when the economy improves. A special thank you to Marcy Doud because she was on the task force committee and did a phenomenal job in representing the District in the special education recommendations. Director Marchese agreed and noted a presentation by Assistant Superintendent Doud before her time at SPPS, and appreciates that she is our special education lead.

- He encouraged Ms. Gilbert to please call in how to move things forward, and board members are able to be voices of the community and with elected representatives as well. Had some meetings together with Saint Paul Delegation members, and know the Board is able to help as needed.
- Director Ellis noted the MSBA Delegate Assembly last week.
- Curious to know about building things into the formula, and it will be helpful in the future and not something to pay for. If hold the District harmless for pupil counts and compensatory aid - how will they play into that, and things not to do now, but more immediate? Response: Holding the District harmless on pupil count affects stabilizing funding for this school year. Compensatory affects funding for next year, and believe to have most challenges to work with families and students have this whole year disrupted. Some will also depend on the federal government and aid. The other will be, as in the last large budget deficit, districts ended up providing revenue to get State out of deficit - they delayed payments to schools and borrowed property tax payments. It was to a county cash flow provisions, where districts funded part of the money that we got back and to prevent cuts, and still had cuts. One of the things looking at whether to delay payments to schools, which can generate a lot of money just by giving 80% instead of 90%, and would be using own money to do increase in general education formula or not take cuts. The other thing discussed is if local governments are sitting on reserves, and looking in that. Financing options there might be to offset the deficit, and a lot depends on the federal government and if they are going to provide funds to offset.
- She also noted the thinking about impacts for the next five years, and what that means at the state, and multi-year planning as we continue to try to figure out how we can recover and recoup through how we show up in the future. It will continue to have an impact on our district, and how that is being a part of the conversation at the capitol.
- Director Foster thanked Ms. Gilbert for her work and commitment, in continuing to be champions for public education.
- Superintendent Gothard thanked Mary - she has been an indispensable partner, and needs for relationships and staying connected to lawmakers and know she will continue to fight for Saint Paul and public education.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Director Foster moved to approve the Legislative Agenda for 2021 Legislative Session. The motion was seconded by Director Brodrick and Director Allen.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

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

Director Foster moved approval, and it was seconded by Director Brodrick, to recess the Committee of the Board Meeting in order to move to the Special Meeting - Truth in Taxation Hearing. The Committee of the Board Meeting recessed at 5:48 p.m.

The Committee of the Board Meeting reconvened at 6:40 p.m.

VI. DISTANCE LEARNING & HYBRID UPDATE

Superintendent Gothard then introduced staff to present an update on Distance Learning and Hybrid. The guiding principles were reviewed, as well as the dial of hybrid stages with the District currently in Distance Learning 2.0 for all students. During the month of December as DL updates, there is a 2 part series to share the academic work to share the work being done for high levels of instruction at equitable levels. He shared a framework for this critical work, greater efforts to strengthen the educational efforts; COVID has presented challenges, and the one core to our work is to provide instructional and ensure equitable learning for all students and strategic plan; we have worked tirelessly to address academic challenges and the urgency or closing, providing meals, and providing support and has been responsive and intentional and reflects cross functional work to improve long term student outcomes.

An update to Hybrid Stages 2 and 3 was also shared, including details on site readiness, important dates, and potential impacts.

The next portion of the presentation focused on ensuring high levels of instruction and learning during COVID-19. Part I at the Committee of the Board meeting will focus on:

- Unfinished learning
- Credit recovery
- Specialized Services
- Engaging families as partners

Part II at the Regular Meeting on December 15th will focus on:

- Strengthening academic core
- Culturally Responsive instruction
- Social/emotional support
- Academic Support Center
- Senior Blitz

The definition of of “unfinished” learning was reviewed first. Graphs showing COVID-19 learning loss forecasts for Grades 3-8 in math and reading were shown. Data from across the nation, as well as the region was also shared.

Within the SPPS 9-12 Support portion of the meeting, the impacts on seniors was discussed, academic student supports for grades 9-12, and next steps.

Within Specialized Services, the topics of instruction, social/emotional learning, resources, and family supports were shared.

Additional information was also shared in engaging families as partners, and new ways that our schools are engaging, and District efforts to fill in the gaps.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Allen requested further information on the rationale for switch classroom teachers in the middle of the year, and what brought us to that decision? Response: There will be situations where teachers may have an approved ADA accommodations and are now teaching virtually, and some of their students may have opted into hybrid. That shift will need to happen because of the need for a licensed adult in that classroom.
    - She went on to note concerns because we are in this state of instability, and to add another layer of instability is concerning. Understanding this is what we will need to do because of accommodations, but wondering if way to maneuver around that on an individual basis to make

accommodations for students and families? Response: There will be movement, and will be looking at if move students - either case changed based on availability based on choice and teacher of assignment may or may not be able to do that. Also, the parameters and need to be mindful. Lots of different force in what a hybrid looks like. Through negotiations and working with maximum flexibility and believe arrived at a good place - some disruptions but not as many as if we did on September 8th. The time we have taken to do best way possible has paid off, but there will be disruptions.

- She also noted and appreciated the hard work and thought in how to go to hybrid, and want to encourage everyone to dive into how to perfect distance learning and fill where needs are not being met because we will be in this situation for a while, or may need to go back into it. Focus work on perfecting distance learning. Response: Hybrid learning is distance learning, and still interacting online with teacher. We have a lot of work to do remaining with DL, and know that will be a part of it.
- Director Kopp noted questions about Virtual Learning School, including enrollment options an opportunities to still enroll? Response: The original last enrollment date was November 9th, and one of the pieces beginning to discuss - families opt into this program, and if they didn't, their option was hybrid - we know there are some additional requests to opt into VLS, and need to provide that opportunity for families, and contingent if we launch on January 19th, and communication to families to confirm their enrollment. There will be an opportunity to sign up and communicated with families contingent on the decision in January.
- About VLS, and enrollment capacities at sites - imagine it varies? How was that determined? Response: One of the things offered and allowed teachers a perspective on sharing was voluntary decision if teaching hybrid, and make a choice to keep the current class roster, and mean they would be teaching students in hybrid and students in VLS. The capacity of VLS is with large amount fo staff with approved accommodations from HR. That factors into who is teaching VLS. Enrollment is the driver of capacity and will staff accordingly.
- She also noted the complexity of this from multiple schools, needs, desires, and appreciation of schools team, and building leadership for communicating with families.
- Director Marchese question that in terms of planning with Stages 2 and 3, is the plan to consider Stages 2 and 3 to happen simultaneously? Response: The plan would be to launch Stage 2 and 3 simultaneously, which would mean in a context of PreK-5 launched on the same day for hybrid.
- Talk about thinking of why that way? Response: Our readiness targets and process based on readiness and took time to have each stage ready on their own, and had time for Stage 3 to be thought through. It provides a better opportunity for elementary schools, and this will ease planning and logistics. By adding Stage 3 at a later date, there would be potential disruptions in routes in transportation, etc. We have used this additional time to plan for Stage 3 and feel more confident.
- It makes sense to think about PreK-5 at one time because of logistics and at the same time because so many buildings organized in that way. Will the calculation change for K-8? Response: We think of grade bands being serviced. Stage 4 would launch the middle school component of K-8 schools. There is consistency for Stages 2 and 3 for all sites because it is inclusive for all grade bands. It will not cause disruptions if the middle school grades are not moved in Stages 2 and 3, but are moved as planned in Stage 4. In thinking about that grade band, there are students in Special Education that may be receiving service at those sites.
- Director Ellis noted questions in the difference in Group A and Group B. Response: Group A would be representative student group who would attend on Monday and Tuesday, and Group B would be the group of students who attend hybrid on Wednesday and Thursday.
- What if a family in Group A feels that Group B is better for their needs and schedule? Would they be able to move? Response: There are some opportunity to balance classes, but the work put in on the front end in designing, there will be some room for flexibility, but not a lot. We want to randomize

opportunities for students, while prioritizing opportunities for families. We may see a small number of shifts and changes with facilities and total number of students to bring into a classroom, and transportation and keeping families together. That is a site-specific concern that families could share with their building.

- Director Ellis noted that schedules may work better for some families, and adjusting once students back in school, and flexibility and opportunity to adjust.
- About staffing, curious because we talked about the possibility of students having different teachers, and what that means for students who received special education services, and does that mean the support staff will change as well? Response: One of the things we are looking at in Stage 1 is that there was flexibility because of the size of the stage in returning to hybrid. In Stages 2 and 3, and staffing, it's based on enrollment in VLS and accommodations. Because of enrollment in VLS and accommodations, there may be some changes, but not a whole team, only the individual who needs an accommodation to work remotely. In regards to accommodations, there could be a shift. But it is more flexible who stays in case manager, but provides in person services. There may be another person added to the team, and keep the case manager. We are trying to keep consistency for students and including the paraprofessionals, but it is also about accommodations of the staff in how flexible we can be.
    - If switching who student has been with since January, and hope intention that those with our students as support have been there and stay there; students will need consistency especially if their classroom teacher changes.
- It seems there is conversation about elementary coming back in hybrid, and wondering about changes for middle and high school students. Think it's still a little gray as to what happens - will those teachers change, and will this carry into later stages? Response: Teachers across the district who apply for and seek an accommodation through the ADA may find themselves not able to provide in person support and teaching for students. There is opportunity if we bring students back, that individual may not be available in person, and will be a systemic challenge and situation we face. Our focus currently is on identifying better ways to support distance learning and in person learning considerations, and will be part of the discussion in hybrid in Stage 4.
- Whatever system for staffing, will continue with middle and high school. If we have students in VLS, and students returning in hybrid, there will be same transition and/or schedule modifications to make, and trying to figure out impact on students, especially seniors, and all students from 6-11. Response: To a certain degree, yes, there will be students who opt for VLS and staff not able to provide in person support. The difference is in the scheduling from elementary to middle and high schools and the impacts this hybrid model could have, and moving those pieces around, and see how the variables impact. We are continuing to work through those scenarios. The threshold for cases is also higher for secondary cases as well.
- As we're building our system to bring students back in hybrid, but that Stage 4 will be middle and high school, so what we build now will be important for Stage 4.
- Director Vue noted the timeline, but noted concerns about opportunities for families to provide feedback and noted the readiness indicator. Where are families' comfort level right now? We're asking them again to make accommodations and changes to their lives, as they jungle the hybrid schedule and DL schedule. What kind of opportunities are we giving families to provide feedback? Response: We did ask input from families over a month ago for Stage 2 and 3, and are currently planning to ask families about their experiences in distance learning. Since we are in the design stage, it is something to take into consideration as we finalize the survey. Given that it would be quite a bit out, and might be more relevant in terms of the timeline.
- Are there plans to send new surveys or communicate with families, maybe not right now, but as we move closer? Response: Yes, there are plans to communicate further with families. Unless we are

moving to Stage 4, we would not administer another pulse family survey similar to Stage 2 and 3 in terms of reach out for feedback. It would be related to experiences of students and families in distance learning.

- Are we talking a week or two out before the date of action where we move? Response: It would be asking for family input after the winter break, and administer the surveys for family input so it would be closer to the timeline.

- Director Allen thanked the team for the presentation.
- With the reading scale, it looked like the slope started at grade level, but are there adjustments for students who may be coming into a certain grade but not reading at that level? Response: On the RIT scale, the scale is vertical, and across all grade levels. That line is the average, but does not correspond to a level, and one of the advantages of an assessment like this. Wherever students score on a map, their scores are averaged together. It is important who takes the assessment and all their data is combined together in a vertical scale. It is the average of all the score, and wherever the student is and included in that grade level score and averaged in no matter where their score is on the scale.
- Director Allen noted the data for students passing or failing, and the data for SPPS was not broken down by demographic groups or race. Our disparity gap is larger than other states - what do we look at for our district? Response: We have preliminary data to share with how those numbers look. We can compare quarter 1 final grade data compared from this year to last year, and how far where we were knowing pandemic is intermediary, and look at for 6-12. For 34% course completion in Q1, we know at this time last year, that number was 9%. This information tells us double the amount of courses not passed between this year and last year. We also have data around students who qualify for FRL, racial groups, and students with disabilities. It is being compiled and hope to share fully next week. About the reading, at national and state level, in reading looks similar to SPPS. The reading looks a little better in SPPS. We did have disproportionality related to the racial breakdown of grades, and preliminarily, it looks like disproportionalities carried forward and see again in Q1 of this year, and will have it next week if disparities are exacerbated, or continue at their regular pattern, which is still not good, but have gotten worse and will have in Part 2.
- About the credit recovery program, and recommendation and concerns around process, and want to emphasize how important it is for students to have skills to allow them to obtain a living wage, or be able to be successful in community college, college, tech school or next choice. Hoping in credit recovery process, and looking at deficits to receive because of COVID in education, and more targeted in college essays and other skills that can obtain them a living wage position. We need to align those. Just passing students along does not help them be successful in the long run.
- Director Kopp thanked staff for the presentation and information.
- Also appreciate focus on whole student and looking at whole child, whole family and anticipating the difficulties that students may have such as mental health, focusing.
- Heard a lot of great information about resources from Director Ginther and Director Kilgore, and tools available. Know those get pushed out through schools and teachers - is there also a place where these things can live to refer families and students? A real easy place for these things to live - like a one-pager? Response: We are collecting all best practices in Family Engagement, and with Ms. Carlstrom and supporting Ms. Bolling, and she is gathering all things together to learn from one another and have that resource as well. In OFECP, we will have that and it will be easy to use, and in a place to all use and learn from it. Often times it does fall on support staff. Ms. Kimani also provided insights to support students and school based mental health supports and centralized supports to provide to teachers and families and school-linked mental health supports. She noted the challenges, but also working district wide, and referrals or need no matter what school, and getting this

information out to school sites to families. In talking about the whole child and meeting all needs in addition to academics, and to have a daily connect with students in DL and plan to continue during hybrid, to have someone checking in with each student. Also the importance of ensuring to look at responses as a check-in and to notice if we see struggles or responses, and to reach out to family to see if there are other actions we can do to meet their needs.

- Appreciate that we are starting to do low-tech ways of doing things, but instinctually human in reaching out to others who need each other and using technology where we can, but also using our hearts to elad that way, and grateful for work and resources are being gathered.
- Know there are different mutual aid sites in community and neighborhoods, and sharing those resources with those organizations in those places, and talking to families, and hearing things, and another touch point outside of technology and school but embedded in the community.
- Thanks to everyone for the hard work and grateful for it as a board member and parent.
- Director Marchese echoed thanks to the team and appreciation for work being done and intentionality.
- He also noted that the data on and behind unfinished learning is so important and statistics, and need to absorb the impact of that long term for students because we are losing precious time with many students through this. Not by intent, but in this environment, Want us to think about how we are going to think about dealing with it right now, but long term. The after effects will last a long time and require different planning and thinking. Are we thinking down the road about how we will need to teach and curriculum differently given a significant portion of students with learning loss during this time and adjust expectations down the road, and how are we going to be able to adapt to that? Concerned about long term impacts on the community and how we grapple with that, or early research or curricula design right now. Response: We are going to focus on core instructional work which is one of the areas to have a solid foundation. Often happens, we move too quickly without securing the core into the interventions, and they have gaps in what should be their core knowledge. Part of our work around emphasizing culturally responsiveness is infusing the core with clear practices to allow identity, grade-based behavior to support core learning and build relationships. We are looking at will students want to repeat, come back, build relationships to stay with us, and need to reshape addressing instruction to emphasize the core. We need to go back and solidify the core based on data. In Teaching and Learning, we have brilliant minds who know their content area and tell more about what has to change. In classrooms, teachers ask if they move students along in next 5 months, and year, and unfinished learning could look further out. We need to narrow and what we are asking students to do and standards that really matter and are important for their success, and let others go. She noted stories from Academic Support Centers, and the breakdown as to why something SPPS needs to go back to doing in addressing the core. We know that even prior to the pandemic, the response to how serving students, it needed work, and look at multiple ways. We need to look at how to recover from this time, and how to serve students differently. We need to continue operating from a place of high expectations with high support. We need to support students to go better places and stay there. We have also been able to capture curriculum online and archive it, and have resources cataloged and parcel out or tie into for families and teachers and community partners, and use to boost students. Lastly, we had an ongoing talk at looking at summer school differently, and regularly we serve 15,000 students, and maybe look at 5th quarter, or 3rd semester, and conversation at CGCS, and definitely want to have that discussion now.
    - This is an opportunity to remimage some of important aspects of reaching and working with students. In terms of the disparities we have seen, and ways our students have or have not been engaged in the past, really raise a challenge to system to respond differently and a chance for a reset with new tools, and take advantage of “never waste a crisis” and opportunity to rest in ways we do things, and expectations of our students and right support and focus, we will have success

and they will be successful. Urge to push envelope to that commitment now with opportunity to push for some things to change in different ways. We have heard that from community, and have this as an opportunity to reset.

- Curious to how we are engaging parent advisory committees and members in these conversations around awareness of services, what students need, what families need to be supported. They are sources of information in the feedback loop. Our OFECP staff still meets, and how is that happening now, and how is information being passed on to buildings and central administration? Response: The parent advisory councils are still meeting. Early in the year, they met directly with Dr. Gothard, and also ask specific questions. Additionally, when PACS meet, the staff then share with Ms. Kilgore, and as see themes, those are brought to the leadership teams. We are not seeing themes right now, but individual concerns. We are starting to see those settle down, and more concrete agenda items with the beginning of the year beginning to settle down, and report back with themes.
    - PACS are a great way to promote information and services and new tools bringing forth to students and families. These are folks who can help to spread that message in community in relationships they have and share backgrounds and abilities. This is a two-way street, and tough now without random conversations, and be intentional on when we do that.

- Director Ellis thanks staff for the presentation. She noted that she is so angry that this is the experience of our students in our district in unfinished learning - that's painful. She acknowledged a few folks acknowledging parents and how they are supporting their children and students, and that is happening everyday. At the core of what our families want, is to know if their child is not doing well, how they help them. Appreciate that was mentioned several times.
- She noted her previous question in recovery of credits for students, and thinking about our seniors, and asking how we are recovering credits in same way that students are trying to recover their current classes. We have folks supporting our students and navigators and reaching out to get them to the finish line, but still not sure how we are doing online DL differently for students with credit recovery. What is the difference, or the same? Response: A conversation with MDE was noted, as well as concrete examples with teachers in what they do differently to approach it differently. In conversations with MDE, we have been encouraged to look at possibilities for students to earn partial credit, and look at the credit and requirements, and partial credit offered. We can apply and look for rigours coursework, and pull back barriers that are adult-based interfering with students abilities to recover these credits. We can allow children to show their knowledge through a portfolio or project or other ways to show their knowledge, and community and standards met, and political activism and expressions. There are ways to approach grading and earning credit in non-traditional ways that MDE does not regulate, but our local agreement as SPPS what flexibility to put in place to ensure students are learning, high expectations, but not held back by a number of assignments or something unrelated. She noted conversations around grading in CGCS, and attendance tied to grading, and other items tied to grading. We asked schools to look at their grading policy through an equity lens and make changes to support more students doing better and the concept of holding students harmless. Mr. Ginther then provided details on examples to support students. There are two pieces - work with Evening High School and ALC to figure out what are small victories as mentioned - we did see 6% in progress grades in positive direction, and sense of urgency and high expectations. We have also seen no assignments in the last week, but supporting students to achieve in Q1 classes, and provide supports and traction with 6% gain. There is a lot of work to be done, with 1:1, small group tutoring, and need to continue that engagement. We will be back in person at some point, adn need to re-engage our young people. Reiterating not their fault, and get time with attraction in DL. As we plan for in person supports as able to safely - that is a collaboration, and will work with ALCs, summer learning, and high schools to coordinate a plan in how it looks differently.

- She also noted another question with data around the region, Midwest, metro, and didn't break down 34% with Q1 grades that were failing. Is that just seniors, or across the district? Response: We have that data. Of 34% of 2020-21 Q1 grades for 9-12 graders failing, and 66% passing. Lat year, those students in that same Q1 time in 19-20, their fail rate was 15%. They went from 15% to 34%, which is more than 50% increase. Show next Tuesday is who of that 15% increased, and there is a predictable pattern, and same pattern seen for too many years. There may be some bright spots. When looking at 36% of 6-12 graders, 31% of those students this year had failing courses, and 69% were passing. Last year, that number was 12% of 6-12 graders, and 88% were passing. In 6-8 grade, last year, 9% were failing, and 91% were passing, compared to 29% of 6-8 graders failing, and 71% passing. The percentage of grades, and they do represent students, and that's why increase are things we would not want. The unit shared is grades, not students. We are talking grades at courses, and do have data to shows that there may be students failing 1 course or 2; we have a variety of schedules and see a variety of amounts of courses that one student could be failing.
- Irate and sad for students to feel like this on top of everything else.
- There were a couple press conferences to talk about in district and students not doing well, and brought this up, put attention to it, and same attention and care needs to be given to students. Appreciate this presentation and more information to come. Do need comparison, but need to know what we're going to do. Need Saint Paul and what's happening and work we're going to do. After have information and made moves, then comparison might be helpful. Encouraged to focus time and attention here in SPPS.
- She also noted and appreciated all that is happening, but is struggling with this one, as parent, community member - this one is hard.
- Superintendent Gothard shared that this is high level discussion - nto the first or last had very direct conversation with folks to direct this work. The grades allowed by mid-quarter progress reports, and when saw that data point, it was not good, and shared concern and direction to do something different. Did see improvement for Q1. We turn it back to schools, to do better and how to support them, adn systems to build, time to allot, and draw from each other what is working and share that. We have deeply engaged plans at mainly high schools across the board, and we are trying to set context, and make adjustments for presentations for taste of what we are doing differently at this time.
- Director Brodrick shared that this discussion and points made by board members in the question waiting to ask with a problem to get meaning out of SPPS data that said 34% of Q1 grades were failing, and as clarified, this is a piece of data that gives percentages of grades, and hoping by next week, a clearer idea of percentage of students who are either failing 1 class, and want to know percentage of kids who are failing 2 or more classes, 3 or more, most of their classes, and try to get from that original 34% of quarter grades, and extrapolate in terms of students and percentage of students who are failing. Response: Yes, we want to know the percentage of courses failed, and how does that compare to last year, and want to know about courses failed, about breakdowns in specific categories, which help us pivot and determine instructional practices to take place.
    - It is important for us to know the percentage of failed grades because that tells us where indeed we are failing, and may give information in what areas in curriculum we are failing. This piece of information 34% of grades are failing grades, is important piece of information. We also need to focus on the students who need support, and know what percentage of students are failing a lot of classes, or dropped out of school. Then we come in and focus in and identify those students. Response: It is a both-and, and a yes all the way around. Also look forward to hearing about in deconstructing these data points and turn into information and our senior blitz plan - our design to do just that - go in and get seniors support they need with all supports, and put more and more support, even in DL, with support and questions answered, if teachers do not have enough time.

    - As a high school social studies teacher, and taught 12th graders, and students towards the finish line, that plan is very important without a lot fo time, and need to ensure all seniors get to that finish line.
- Director Vue noted appreciation of the information, research, learning loss, and graphs. He is conflicted about the term “unfinished learning” and undertone of marginalization, and it not “teaching and learning” and students bear too much of the responsibility of fault in this matter. He noted his experience in his education. In talking about mental health, and not identify as work perpetually unfinished or incomplete. Can we change to “disrupted learning” to explain how this practice is occurring? Response: Words ring very true, and often talked about this idea. There is a fair amount of research, and drawn to “unfinished” due to state of world pandemic and constant moving to the next stage and questions, and sense this will be with us for a considerable amount of time. This is an attempt by those in urban areas who are oding work in this areas to be more sensitive to the context that this is not on backs of students - it is a step forward rather than learning loss, slide, those deficit thinking - it is one step forward, and thinking this is a better term and consistent with Council research. This perspective is very interesting and valid and appreciated, and highlights what we want to talk about which is the quick stop of teaching, and inability to receive the teaching due to closure of the district. Will take into consideration this terminology or other to be more adequate. Words do matter. “Unfinished” does send message that we will complete and finished, and for seniors it is the time to graduate with class and cohort, and looking at data to guide instruction and supports to get back to place where they can thrive and succeed “Disrupted” also acknowledges disruption and change. We also still need to finish and complete. There is no perfect word to describe where we are, and will look into being more clearly respectful and representative of students.
- SEAB Member Ali noted one question regarding credit recovery and how a semester plan could help most students - in SPPS, there is a quarterly progress grade, and how those students who may fail in Q1 and allowing to earn back credit with average semester style grading style to reduce the number of students may be failing. Response: Everything is on the table, and messaging to families is evaluating success in Q3, Q4. These are unprecedented times and doing anything and everything in credit recovery, and in how to pull assets students have and knowledge in different and innovative ways. More assignments is not how we should be doing that, but looking at portfolio and project-based learning, and work that many are a part of in these incredible times. That is the drive of this work to look at as a semester and build on what they know, re-engage, and support them to the finish line to a bright future. That idea is spot on for Q1 credit recovery, and to build on that, and all is on the table as we move forward in these uncertain times. Things are fluid and appreciate that thought.
- Director Foster thanked the team for the presentation and questions for next week. She reiterated the request for understanding and information in talking about what is happening in SPPS and what we are doing, what we learned, doing differently, and how that is supporting students.
- Dr. Gothard shared that the purpose of this presentation isn’t to blame - COVID-19 is the reason we find ourselves here. The reason with emotion is this disease without a vaccine and was not handled as well as it could have been, and are struggling with that. He is going to direct and direct that we do. better for our students, what they need and how we can help in new and better ways. It starts with relationships and connections, and encouragement. There can’t be a grade on that interaction and relationship. Our kids are smart and know realness and genuineness, and need us to be consistent and tough, but caring, and create a safe environment to be their awesome selves and share what they need. There are historically underserved students in our district and COVID has shined a light on that. We do need to share a direction, and appreciate the work of our schools. We are not going to wait until April or May, and need to get this under control and do better right now, and willing to support in any way through parent meetings, community meetings. We need to be excellent at

communication, and support and in new ways. Thankful to the team, and we are one district that understands we have challenges and are not shying away from the data. We need everyone to take the perspective that we need to do better, and to look at the response and have that carry us forward - focus on the day when we did kids right, community right, and should all be proud. Work to do and room to improve and committed to do that. Appreciate the ongoing support of board members.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Board members thanked their colleagues for the thorough questions and bringing useful information, and shows the strong work of the board on details, and asking thoughtful questions from different perspectives and learning a lot every meeting. Thanks for engagement and discussion.

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

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Allen	Yes
Director Kopp	Yes
Director Marchese	Yes
Director Ellis	Absent (technology)
Director Foster	Yes
Director Brodrick	Yes
Director Vue	Yes

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 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