

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

September 8, 2020
4:30 p.m.

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

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

SEAB: K. Ali

Staff: Superintendent Gothard; Chuck Long, General Counsel; 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; Kaying Thao, Administrator to the Board; 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 Brodrick.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

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

IV. SWEARING-IN CEREMONY FOR DIRECTOR JIM VUE

Chair Foster then welcomed Jim Vue and his family for the swearing-in ceremony. Following the ceremony, Director Vue shared significance of the book he chose, The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein.

He recounted reading books to his children, and one day his daughter Gia realized they were reading the same books, and she chose a favorite book of his instead. His daughter Gia couldn't be with us on this swearing-in, and it is bittersweet in both that she couldn't be with us in this celebration, and also that Director Vue is being sworn in in the context of COVID-19 and all who have been affected. He noted that good things need to continue to happen and people need to continue to step up and do this important work, and he looks forward to working with those who want to do this great work.

Board members then shared congratulations to Director Vue, and their excitement to work with him. They also noted that his light and energy are what is needed right now. Appreciation for conversations with him and glad he is able to join us in these unique times, and welcomed him to the Board. They know he has come to this job with sincerity and honesty. Thanks to Director Vue for his work with the District and City and children of SPPS. It takes a brave soul to step into this role and do this work, and during these times, and excitement to work with and get to know Director Vue. Board members also noted their appreciation for his work thus far in the District, and invited him to reach out during his work on the Board. Superintendent Gothard noted his time with Director Vue throughout the District and seeing the importance of family in this work and together, and looks forward to working with him and getting to know him during this meaningful time. Director Foster also noted the passing of Marny Xiong, and the good spirit of Director Vue to be in this space and position, and to bring a new vision to this space. We honor Marny and may she rest in power, and also move forward with a full Board.

IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Gothard began the meeting by welcoming everyone to the meeting and to the first day of the School Year 2020-2021, and how different this year is for our students, staff, families, and community. He noted the work throughout the past 6 months with every member of 6000-person team, and to find a new way of doing things during this time. It is difficult. He was able to share the first day with his student, and to hear a live teacher voice through the iPad and engaging with teacher and class, it was relieving and feel proud and appreciate our staff who have worked so hard to do this in a new and different way to reconnect us. A theme for the day is connection. There may have been some expectations not quite met, but the connection was really important today. We will continue to work incredibly hard and challenge ourselves to take the education of our children as serious as possible for a meaningful and relevant experience, and one met with high expectations to support, and consistently look to new ways to engage, connecting, and doing this work and doing it better. He is so proud of our staff today, the Superintendent Leadership Team meeting since March, and dreaming of a new way to do this and build it as needed across the City. It has not been easy, but most incredible work in his career. He has been able to meet leaders in new ways, and learn from them, and to keep moving forward. It has been an incredible study of leadership, change, community and culture and one that we have never lost sight of what students and community needs. Balancing health and wellness with education and mental and emotional needs since March. To the Board, they have been so supportive and appreciate that as well and their work and dedication, by challenging and supporting with high expectations for the Superintendent and our accomplishments together. He then provided a preview for the Reopen presentation, by breaking down this plan into chunks for information relevant at the time. Tonight's focus will be on forecasting what it may look like when the time is right to move to a less restrictive model.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp shared her experiences as a parent, and watching her child connect with her classmates and teacher, and her excitement for school that is magical. Huge love and respect for the

staff who have been working hard to make those connections. It's making a difference and appreciative of the work of staff and families in navigating this new environment .

- Director Marchese noted it is a bittersweet start to the school year with this being his family's last year in SPPS with his son a senior. It's an adventure, but one of the strangest first days. He shared his experiences, and to see how this goes for both his son and all learners and staff. We are going to be on this journey together and it will take some time.
- Director Ellis also noted her personal experience with her son and family. It was fun to see the excitement, but also things to mourn. She also noted she is usually in buildings on the first day, and to not do that feels very different. To hear student laughing over the iPad, and hope that it continues to feel more like a typical school year each day.
- Director Brodrick noted his experience with over 70 first days of school, and the magical sense of each first day. This particular first day is like none other. He is feeling confident and know SPPS will do what we always do - endure and prevail.
- Director Allen noted she is excited for this school year with the ability use technology in this era, that our students are knowledgeable about technology, and noted her experience in seeing students in class today. This will move us forward in a positive way and continue to look for the light. Everything uncomfortable leads to something beautiful. While in discomfort, okay with it, because know we have brilliant people in SPPS, and thousands of brilliant minds that support our kids and provide academic services.
- Director Vue noted his observations, which included meeting with the principal and seeing lots of leaders getting back into the rhythm of the school year, teaching kids. He noted phone calls with teachers, parents, and it does feel like we are getting back to it. Excited and ready to dig in a do work.
- SEAB Member Ali noted his experience, and that he is usually between different campuses, and this worked out well in Distance Learning and helped him to not worry about transportation, but to focus on school, but missing interacting and working with students and teachers face-to-face. Hopeful we will go back to normal, and see other students this year.
- Director Foster noted hearing from parents about celebrations and frustrations, and working hard with staff and leaders in buildings. We are doing the job and making shifts and adjustments and folks are being heard. It is a different time and space. An acknowledgement to our SPPS community, we know this is different and challenging. Continue to reach out with feedback, and thanks to staff and leaders for their flexibility and communication and to continue making those shifts. She looks forward to being back in school buildings, and while she is missing that this year, she appreciates that school is opening up, and getting into the rhythm of the school year.

V. SEAB REPORT

SEAB Member Ali noted the first day of school and that SEAB is looking forward to continuing the work and working with board members. There is a concern with SEAB with not having real productive work and connections with board members since last spring, it has been tough to know here we are and where we are going, but hopefully we will get together to make real change and meaning as SEAB.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp noted that she is also excited to continue the conversations that began earlier in the year and throughout the summer. She is excited to learn more and the experience and work of SEAB. She also noted the start of the Premier League and wish SEAB Member Ali's Arsenal Gunners all the best in the upcoming season.

- Director Marchese echoed similar comments, and shared about the ongoing conversations with the small group and SEAB Members, and eager to get back to them and looks forward to that and supporting the work of students on SEAB and making experience and value well-known to everyone.
- Director Ellis noted that SEAB Member Ali has been at every meeting, and appreciates that, and also that it may cause pressure for him, and looks forward to engaging with other SEAB Members at meetings as well, and supporting and working together. She thanked him for his service and dedication in this work.
- Director Brodrick echoed his colleagues, and thanks to our SEAB Members and continued good work as this school year moved on.
- Director Vue acknowledged the hard work of SEAB and SEAB Member Ali and in looking and listening to the previous meetings, always refreshing to hear perspective and voice, and if anything to help to move work forward, he is open, and to continue the good work and will support in any ways needed.
- Director Allen noted that she also looks forward to working with SEAB, and needing to get together with schools starting and things happening, and new way of things, and starting to gather student voice this school year, and love to see SEAB helping with middle school student councils to get connected to have mentorship and build a stronger organization as we move forward. Thanks for the work and connect soon.
- Director Foster echoed her colleagues and thanks to SEAB. She stands in appreciation of flexibility shown as we shift to tough times, and other priorities rose at the occasion. We are committed to working with SEAB and working to raise and elevate student voice and choice across the district and thanks for leadership in that role. We are in times of consistency change and challenge SEAB, the Board and Leadership to be intentional as we move into the Fall about creating the space to move forward in this work with our SEAB students.
- Superintendent Gothard appreciated SEAB Member Ali sharing. It is a different time, but hope that never feel like the voice of students is lost in the district. He noted his relationship with SEAB Member Ali and learning from him, and is a great model for all students and leaders in this district. He appreciates the willingness and schedule, and appreciate for being here and being present.

VI. REOPEN SPPS PLAN UPDATE

Superintendent Gothard then welcomed Chief Watkins and staff to present the Reopen SPPS Plan Update. The presentation reviewed updates and information in these four areas:

- Distance Learning 2.0 Return to School
- Transition to Hybrid: Readiness Metrics
- Workforce Updates
- Operations Updates

The guiding principals were reviewed, as well as the timeline, and recommendations for stages of return to in-person learning, including Distance Learning, Hybrid Model, and Return to In-Person.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

Distance Learning 2.0 Return to School - Prioritizing the needs of students

First Day

- Staff have done an incredible job getting ready for a positive launch of Distance Learning 2.0
 - Opening week - Amazing 5 days of preparation

- Focus on connection
 - Relationships with families
 - Phone calls and connectivity (e.g. WIFI)
 - iPads and equipment
- Communicate opportunities for same time learning
- Connection = Engagement = Deep learning

Social Emotional Learning

- Create connections
- Establish relationships
- Build a sense of community

Social Emotional Learning Supports

- Daily synchronous SEL touchpoints

Montessori

- Multi-age design will continue in Distance Learning 2.0
- Program features were shared
- Monthly principal meetings to collaboratively identify areas of focus
- Envision SPPS (Montessori Work Group) will restart in September/October to gather input about our Montessori Pathway

Dual Language/Immersion features were also shared.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp thanked staff for the presentation. She loved the opportunities for staff at the end of school days to talk about best practices and what is working, and that engagement is great, and hopeful something to continue with staff to collaborate in real time ways about their days and how to improve. She is interested in hearing progress for the hands-on aspect of Montessori, and recounted her experience in a Montessori classroom with hands-on, tactile instruction, as well as dual language and immersion, which are different challenges and problems to solve and to hear how they progress.
- With dual language and immersion, and maybe Montessori, there are opportunities for families to connect, such as town halls, because they are unique programs. Would there be an opportunity for communities who are not dual language or immersion or Montessori to get together in a similar way, because while the topics are different, it would be an opportunity for families to get together as families are side-by-side with their students, and to talk about what is working or not working, and the possibility of opening that model for other programs? Response: Yes, there are similar opportunities for families in the PreK-12 level.
- Are those communicated through their principal or school? Response: Yes, that's correct.
- How do we feel about the first day of supports for translations? Are we able to meet the needs of families who speak other languages than English? Response: Yes, in our conversations with 11 principals, that has been much of the work. If we were in buildings, it would be working with another staff member to help, and we need to approach it a little differently in a coordinated fashion and answer those questions for the families. That will be the continued work as we launch this week.
- It was good to hear about Envision SPPS work is re-emerging in Montessori and dual language context. Is that true for other aspects of Envision SPPS as well? Response: Absolutely. We had to curtail it with the events of last March, but be an ever important part of our work moving forward. These six months have caused us to look at the District in a different way as we move forward, and

want to continue the conversations we started and deliver to the communities, and use Envision SPSP as a hub for other matters to benefit the District. The opportunities for Envision SPSP include enrollment, retentions, how we use our buildings, efficiencies, and understand program popularity and opportunities. Truly looking at what our District means to our community, students and families, and to do more of that, and looking to effectively and efficiently use our resources.

- Director Kopp noted that is work she is interested in, and engaging with the team and families, and excited to see that work ramping back up.
- Director Marchese thanked the team for this portion of the presentation and the work being done with information about opening day and the dual language and Montessori programs.
- In terms of supports for families and caregivers and helping them to be ready for transition, what has been done for families in terms of educating them on best practices and ways to support their students in this distance learning environment, like parent training. Is that happening at a building level or a classroom level? Response: We are planning to operate academic support centers where students can go to receive in person support with technology and academics, as well as social-emotional supports. There is also an opportunity for families that need technology support.
- Director Marchese appreciated the update on the academic support centers and looks forward to more information on them. He was thinking of parent training and “professional development”-like training for parents and caregivers, from not only a technology perspective, but also for how to support students with distance learning, such as ergonomics and spaces for learning, and ways to be successful in the distance learning environment. Response: Welcome meetings in Early Education are important, and information was shared on how welcome meetings look in a digital environment. They reviewed the iPad, and more importantly, the gifts and talents of the child and what each day will look like. Normally, welcome meetings are 20 minutes, and this year, they are 30 minutes with each family and is a great opportunity with feedback from families at this time. The focus at this time in all grades is connection, and supporting parents with videos and instructions on attendance, and also family checklists and embedded tutorials, and will progress each week, with conditions for at home learning, graphics, and ways to engage. We wanted to start in the space of connections, and learned from feedback that there is so much information coming at parents and caregivers, that it's hard to know the priorities, and the phasing-in of information for parent supports and delivering it at a district level and school building level. There was also a special acknowledgement of the Special Education team with back to school meetings, and answering questions about SPED and the logistics for this year in collaboration with the Office of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships.
- Director Ellis requested more information for support services in Montessori and Dual Immersion. Response: In terms of thinking about how to create schedules and collaboration, we adhere to the IEP and best way to support in distance learning or brick and mortar. There are lots of updates for supports, outreach, testing, and idea of adopt the new normal of completing function in DL context. That is being shared with staff, and also shared with families for clear expectations. The collaboration between OTL, Schools, and Special Education to support students with any school they attend. We are designing scheduling together and support together, and a group that works between MLL and OSS for dually identified and working together to better support our students. That collaboration is continuing.
 - What does it look like to reach out to families in Montessori or Dual Language? What does outreach look like? Response: From Special Education, we have increased our interpreting positions to increase collaboration between OSS and families. There are interpreters and outreach within the families, and more support for navigation in special education in goals and objectives.
 - For parents navigating Special Education is difficult, and distance learning makes that more difficult. Fundamentally, what are we doing to connect with families regardless if their child has

special education needs? Response: Out interpreters are calling all families and working with case managers and teachers for how services will be provided in each child's plan, and a contingency in distance learning. They are working to call all families and connecting with new families and addressing needs. For the building in general, learning about expectations and protocols, there is outreach to families to have this conversation for supports for each child, specifically we are working in collaboration with IEP teams and supervisors and coaches to do outreach, and wanting to make it family friendly and focus on connection, and deeper levels of engagement. Open to ideas as well.

- Director Ellis noted that when families are not face to face, and in calling, but also know from experience and hearing from others of challenges, and as an organization, reaching out to families is important and ensuring they do understand and how to support their child is so important.
- Director Brodrick noted that within online learning, it seems more important than ever, that the learning will require a true partnership and cooperation between students, teachers, and parents. Do we have a good mechanism to assure and encourage our teachers, EAs, TAs, and students, and parents to give us feedback on what is working at that interaction that's the most important. The most important interaction is between teacher and learner. How are we ensuring that feedback loop happens? Response: Distance learning is done online, and in many ways, they collect information like assignment, check-ins, and quality, and different way to assess in real time. For the monitoring from student level, parents, and building level principal. In conversations with principals, that perspective is the challenge in a virtual environment, how we're creating systems to gather that feedback proactively. We know that parents are seeing 100% of content, and there will be questions. Seeing it in this context has changed the landscape - across commitment in schools - first and foremost how are we proactively reaching out to ask what is working well and what's not. How that frames our responses and work to do is important. That's our commitment with building leaders and that authentic experience at the building level that will be important. Based on the number of calls from today, parents are also reaching out like none before - in that context, fielding lots of calls and pose questions of leaders and have them frame it in how teachers are asking questions. To really solicit that important information for our families and students and improve that experience. It's about asking the right question - right now is connection, and will evolve to getting feedback. It will rely on our building leaders to ask initial questions. We also receive emails from parents sharing concerns and successes. It's about being thoughtful and pushing leaders to ask those questions. Many buildings also have parent advisory groups, and leverage those in meaningful way will also be important. We also need to ask who aren't we reaching, and looking at engagement, and how to tailor support and utilize feedback about what families need. It will also be each site looking at that data to go to individual students. It's about support space between student and teacher and what we can do to bolster that and support that - it starts with proactive question about how it's going that will be very important.
- A balance of administrator needs to have between being a leader, but also support staff for teachers.
- Some of the work with counselors and bilingual resource assistants was also shared with course selection and academic support, with an EL counselor and family advocate with Student Placement and OCCR to address a well-rounded approach to create and select the most appropriate education plan for graduation pathways, and for EL students to know their options for their educational plan and support for families. There are also bilingual EAs to support students and families, working with EL counselors for communication. It's a collaboration across the board to support EL students and families, and guided during this time. We do have structures and plans in place and resources to maximize for families to know their options.

- Director Vue noted that in regards to dual language pathway, and it seems there is a good communication pathway in communicating expectations to bilingual students and parents in their home. When we start to get feedback from bilingual students and parents, interested to hear more data collected in order to better support them moving forward in distance learning environment. Response: We continue to seek input. Our dual language program has additional supports from MLL, and also support through the University of Minnesota for a grant to provide training for parents in Spanish and Hmong to ask the needed questions and further supports. The grant did expire last year, but for distance learning, they are hosting town hall meetings and meetings with families to ensure we have the translators and EAs and TAs in the program to better serve and connect. There are concerns with parents about how to support their child in dual language when the parents do not speak that language, and the town halls and meetings are allowing for those questions, and principles to provide answers. We are working on that and plan to meet regularly, and populate the document with questions. The work continues, and we continue to work towards perfection.
 - It's important that students and parents be able to advocate through their language, and responsibility falls to the school to translate to digestible terminology to improve operations in terms of getting feedback. See clearly there is good communication pathway from operations to families and parents, and ensure it goes opposite way as well. Response: we need to be mindful that students are then going home to tell their parents, and mindful that families do not speak the language. The first questions that teachers and principals ask of families is if they speak the language, and then engage in English. If they are fluent, then we engage in that language and be mindful of that.
 - Ensure that students with home languages other than the dual immersion languages are also being supported.
- Director Allen requested more information on the supports for students in post-secondary programs, and transitions with the help of counselors. Response: Some of the transitions we've had in DL and counseling is no different, and supports are continuing. We have three new partnerships with local colleges, such as Mankato, Minneapolis College and Century with concurrent enrollment. We are continuing to move the work forward for education with students, particularly students of color. Also, as we transition to Xello, there will be video tutorials to support students. Through our partnership with Achieve Minneapolis, they have created these tutorials for the post-secondary journey. The main item will be relationships to connect with students and families, and that will be our focus with the capacity of staff and partnerships. We are also working to continue colleague access partnerships like Upward Bound and College Possible to help support students to transition and navigate with PSEO.
 - That connection is important either in-person or virtual. In order for students to be successful, students need to prepare their college essays, and maybe times they may ask for help with their essays to revisit those items, and to have teachers and paras recognizing students in PSEO and they may reach out for resources for success. The transition to college level is so important, and the connections during PSEO to high school teachers is so important.
- Where are our Academic Support Centers going to be located? Response: They will be located at Central, Harding, Humboldt, Johnson, and Washington Tech.
- Also noted a conversation about connectivity and around paraprofessional position, and a good move to attach the paras to a certain grade early on and transition with the students. If we're talking connectivity and the role of the para is to bridge the gap between the student and teacher, and it makes it easier to already have relationships with the student, and continue that year after year. Connectivity is extremely important in distance learning.
- SEAB Member Ali noted his appreciation for his high school counselor.

- Superintendent Gothard thanks the team for their continued work and encouraged feedback as we continue to learn and grow.

Transition to Hybrid: Readiness Metrics - Prioritizing community well-being; Designing fiscally responsible and sustainable solutions

Hybrid stages were shared, with Distance Learning 2.0; to Stage 1 for select special education sites; to Stage 2 for PreK-2, Montessori E1, ECSE, K-12 Autism, DCD Program, and Focus Beyond; to Stage 3 for grades 3-5; to Stage 4 for grades 6-12; to Return to In-Person Learning .

The hybrid transition process was reviewed, as well as hybrid readiness targets in:

- Access and connection
- Community
- Facilities
- Health and Wellness
- Instruction
- Meals
- Schools
- Staffing
- Transportation

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- It was noted it was helpful to see the full picture of returning to schools.
- For virtual learning schools, and as we move towards hybrid for families who are not comfortable going back to the building, what are the steps to be connected to virtual learning and how will that be communicated to the community? Response: While there is an ideal deadline to ensure staffing, virtual learning will always be available and open. When a family would need to transfer to virtual learning, that option is always available if in distance learning or hybrid. We are also planning to have a full-time virtual learning program to open as part of our portfolio of schools. In imagining a scale to balance in number of staffing for virtual and in-person and hybrid, and to abide by certain ratios. It's not congruent to balance and be very careful, and urging to allow to start in DL to account for variable changes, when enrollment is in flux. There may be a lag in families opting for virtual learning compared to other districts who started in hybrid from the beginning. We want to ensure our families feel safe and valued.
- Imagining that when decision comes, families may re-evaluate at that time and how we are reminding folks about the option that as anxiety or decision bubble up, that virtual learning remains another option.
- One of the measurements is about families being comfortable - how will that be done, and to be representative sample of families who are responding to however we are engaging? Response: First, we have been administering a series of pulse surveys and will continue through the Fall with perception data related to these targets. There are questions that ask comfort level and use information and regardless of scale, combine to a level of comfort and level of discomfort. About representation, when we do pulse surveys, we do run calculations and analyses with the survey error and measurement error for representative of the responses. We will do that as well, and as long as we have data to give us numbers to be comfortable with of representative sample, then continue to use pulse surveys. We could get numbers back with representative of the population, and the number used is the student population, which could be more because we have many families with more than one student. We will use that number to be comfortable with the fundings and

generalizability to the population, but maybe not to perspective within the population. To the extent our families answer differently, we may not know that, but the pulse data so far has tended to show us perceptions tend to be more alike than different.

- Noticing on the dial, the level 2 was particular schools or age groups - will the comfort assessed be limited to those folks who will be coming back? Response: Yes, we will ask demographic questions, if they have students in these areas and so we are able to get more specific. We do have pulse surveys for students in grades 6-12 as well.
- Between the decision dates and actual first day of hybrid - what if a “dealbreaker” happens, or other information? Response: We have seen this happen around us and in the country, is cases change or local, large infection rate or other factors. We want to give enough time to factor in those items, and take in sudden changes. We need to be ready to make a hard change in our district. We have distance learning in place so if there is a need for building by building or grade level, we would be able to do that if we have to.
- Board members appreciated the presentation and metrics is helpful to see the factors and thinking and how it will be informed.
- Overall, will there be a place and space to view on the website, like a dashboard for information? Where could we find that information and direct folks? Response: We haven’t finalized how much will be publically available or posted, but will anticipate questions, that have at decision point, the data looks like and mock-ups for a dashboard or one-pager. While monitoring this weekly, we anticipate having static data with the date stamp on the website for our community. At a minimum, we will have static data and decision points available, potentially more within the context and in the city and with the virus. It will be important for folks to see and as much as we can provide will be helpful.
- To follow-up around community targets here - a little concerned about pulse survey being the foundation in the response rates and families/students at the stage looking at. Our pulse surveys are going out broadscale, but way of staging it with different groups, there will be specificity. How are we going to ensure we are getting accurate information from those directly impacted by the decision at that stage? Response: We plan to build in demographic information and questions, and the pulse surveys have been getting a little longer and build in more to ask if there are families with students impacted by these stages we are considering. Another way is to ask general questions about grade level of students, and buildings/sites of attendance to disaggregate to look at responses of those most directly impacted. If we have not planned to do a pulse survey, we are flexible and adjust timelines so we are collecting information at an appropriate time to make these decisions.
- With the first two stages being more narrow, we are relying on folks to respond to a pulse survey as opposed to more outreach to individual population. We need to be more targeted about the outreach that we do, and gather opinions of those most relevant to that stage. A pulse relies on clicking the link and doing the survey. Hope to do more targeted outreach by the population most directly affected.
- Superintendent Gothard also noted how we are weighting comfort based on the other factors as well.
- Director Ellis noted that in going back to the pulse surveys, and they are going out through the District or schools? There is a distinction in that because if from the District if families will be paying as close attention as from schools. Response: We have been sending them from the District; now that school is in session, they will likely continue to be sent from the District and asking schools to also send them through their newsletters, and additional arm of Administration, and will continue to administer them centrally from the District.
- Director Ellis also noted that when families respond to a survey from the District, they are thinking about a school or program specifically where their child attends as opposed to the District overall and distinctions about school specific or District overall. What are we hoping to learn from the pulse surveys? Response: In general, we want to get from the pulse surveys in regard to the comfort level,

the level of comfort they feel knowing their students would be transitions from distance learning at home to hybrid or virtual learning. That would include taking that next step. Some families may choose virtual learning school, but right now at their school of record. Knowing the district is moving to hybrid and transitions to virtual learning schools; for other families it may mean being in person at times and distance learning sometimes. As the District transitions, as do the students into that next step. We want to know from families about the comfort level in taking the next step forward, whatever that may be.

- She also noted that in thinking about the checkpoints and where we are, and talking about specific grade bands, think that those items need to be clear in the survey and who is going to be coming back to buildings so that families are clear about the specific grades, and to be clear about it as a District - in whole or certain grades, and the if not clear, the information may not be relevant or helpful due to the confusion.
- Director Brodrick noted two questions, which will be addressed in the upcoming portions of the presentation. They included how much work have we done in remodeling and staffing have we already done, and how much can we do before we know the numbers, specifically in the targets. Are we pretty close to some of these targets?
- Do we have any data or metrics about the students, who unfortunately, we lost during the spring? Where we are for significant number of students who fell drastically behind because of the events that occurred in March - we know a number of students were affected, and held harmless in those times, and do we have data and remedial work that may be required? Response: This is an item we need to address each year - it wasn't only because of March that we have students who struggle, and continually assess and look for supports that are necessary to get on grade level and progress we need. There were a lot of assessments not administered, and those indicators we usually use, we don't have that data, and will be important to assess students where they are with their skills, standards meeting at their grade levels, and ways to support them. Not impossible to do in DL, but new and look for ways to support students no matter what.
- Ways to establish benchmarks and monitoring were also discussed at a school level - including procedures for educators for students to conduct formative assessments that are evaluated, and a plan made based on the outcome. We also have benchmarks assessments in literacy and math. We may potentially see more gaps, but we need to take students from where they are to where they need to go, and there are supports in place from OTL, OSS, MLL to ensure the educator has the support needed to implement the benchmark assessments. This is also involved with our approach to grading for more rigours, work sampling systems, elementary system, progress reports, and full band of grades for secondary students.
- Obviously, this assessment will happen at the classroom level - the teacher will need to make assessments of the students in their class through an online setting. Back to the line of communication, connection, leadership and support between the teacher, principal, District administrators will be so important. The importance of the communication between classroom teacher, parents and students in assessing where the student is will be so very important. Main concern in terms of distance learning this year. Response: Yes, the educators are familiar with this process and pedagogy, feedback, and work of formative assessment. Alluding to time - they need time, and systems may take longer in distance learning and time to complete the assessments. We are providing additional time and resources, and differentiation is a big part of education, and to start to learn where students are, then go from there in small groups and such. There is a lot of artistry and craftsmanship in teaching. The benchmarks and formative assessments help the teacher to know where to lead the students to the next level.
- Director Vue noted a question about the health and wellness rate in the county and explanation about those figures. Response: That is the number given when first started of guidelines from MDE and

MDH - this is the one indicator provided to districts across the state for their 5 recommendations for models for districts. Right now, we are at just under 20 for the rate, and use a model less restrictive than DL, and said that its one indicator for the ceiling of the model, but not the other 24 items for items to do this well and safely and meet satisfaction of all stakeholders. The number under 30 would allow us for a hybrid model, and over 30 they become more restrictive in those stages.

- There was also further clarification on the number of cases for residents over 14 days per 10,000 people, and is a lagging number based on the previous 2 weeks. It's looking at the health of the county based on cases per 10,000 people.
- For that rate, are these numbers disaggregated by race? Response: They are not currently, and something that we have wondered and working with the health departments, we have voiced in the demographics of the city, SPPS, and of the disproportionate infection rate in our community. We have a great partnership with city and county health departments. We do have data from the city of Saint Paul also, but that is also not disaggregated by race.
- Highlight that fact within this ratio.
- Within the percentages, this is a great way to look at operational pieces of the district and indication of transition from distance to hybrid. With the indicator percentages, are we looking at the flip side of these percentages and their impacts? Response: When we developed these targets, they were developed in the affirmative, and did not take into consideration the inverse. That is because we were looking at what is necessary to move forward, and what we know, because of the operations of the District, there is always some percentage in flux or able to be met, and wanted to compartmentalize those unknowns and concentrate what is necessary to get us to the next phase.
- Director Allen appreciates the thoroughness of safety and looking into not making moves until clear indication the community is safe again.
- Director Foster expressed appreciation for the presentation.

Workforce Updates - Prioritizing community well-being

The SPFE/Special Ed MOU and SPFE Distance Learning MOU were discussed., as well as the MOU with Teamsters.

Staffing in a hybrid environment was also shared.

Staffing in hybrid considerations were also noted, including student and family choice, employee availability, and staffing transitions.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- What have we learned to improve negotiations with SPFE? Sense was this created confusion and anxiety with community, and working towards having a way of doing it that minimizes anxiety. SPPS is only one half, but what does that look like for the District? Response: One of the things we are doing about talking in-person, is that as soon as this is closed with this MOU we will be right back at the table again, and have a nice foundation and can build upon that - including with job responsibilities, and aspects of this MOU be impacted by in-person. Some of the concerns involve health and safety protocol and looking at work options for staff. We recognize that we did get down to the wire with pieces, and our goal is to get back to the table to talk about the implications very soon.
- Thanks to the team for that work, which sometimes isn't easy.
- With the additional FTEs in custodial staff, where does that money come from? To what extent can federal funds be used for staffing? Response: We are looking at using some of CARES funding to

support those needs, and would qualify because it's related to COVID. We have scaled back based on the stages that we may not need 104 right away, but may need to move to that. We may start with around 60, and ways to do that by looking at existing staff, new staff, and utilizing our temp staff as well.

- Are we in a clearer space on expectations within the MOU discussion around synchronous and asynchronous time? Where are we with that baseline? Response: That was an area that required a lot of discussion and a document to address the 70 schools and programs and flexibility to serve students and families, and also acknowledge the autonomy of teachers. We went back and forth about how to best describe sametime and anytime learning, and what to lay out as the basic guidelines. We came to address the fact that it would be a combination of academic and SEL opportunities and regular to account for daily interactions for students and teachers in academics and SEL supports. We adjusted wording and provided examples, and updated a few items, and wanted to be sure the message is for teachers and parents could see and understand multiple opportunities throughout the week to interact with their teachers. Teachers can do more, and allowed us to be more clear in expectations.
- Is there going to be expectations that families receive from their classroom teacher - will there be a place to set out to see the agreement or set forth to understand the baseline? Response: Typically we don't share the contract agreements with the community, but there have been other communications about expectations for families that share the information. There is also a scheduling team working on language similar to the MOU. Our plan is to also send to the principals and assistant superintendents and SPFE as well.
- The superintendent's communication was helpful in seeing expectations and the District planning as a whole. It's good to know if community members want to see specific provisions.
- With the staffing structures, how are we handling issues around flexibility and moving folks consistent with job titles or licensure? How are we working with them and our bargaining units to ensure there is a process and expectations, and the recourse if concerns to express that about where to go? Response: We have laid out roles and responsibilities for support staff, because they may need to shift responsibilities. Unlike the spring, we have laid out typical descriptions for a role, and within various functions, we determine what that may look like. We are trying not to have folks work outside their job description, but they might be assigned something slightly different - such as essential kids care with training for staff, so they feel equipped to support students and families. The reassignments we have to follow-up with staff based on needs across the district, and may run into difficulty if someone is working distance learning, and the role is in-person and there may need to be discussion around that. We are working with our bargaining units to tell them our needs and the staff we may be talking to to keep them in the loop. That is our commitment to follow up with our bargaining units if there is a need to make assignment changes.
- Director Ellis noted questions about how staff are contacted about reassignments? Response:
- Know we approved the Teamsters in March and working on new document as we are talking about the MOU? Response: That is correct
- In keeping what we need for required staff during this time, and on Day 1 of the school year, and how many folks are being reassigned for needs? Response: Right now, we know we have needs in certain areas, but in terms of reassignments, we have found many schools have need for existing para staff. This fall, going into staffing, we did hold about 80 para positions, and still move forward with providing support based on filled positions we have right now. We are more looking at need to hire additional staff than reassign - we have made reassignments in essential kids care there is a need for 25 additional staff, and in the process of hiring for that as well as the reassignments. There will also need to be additional hiring for academic support centers. We are still providing services to students, but have not filled some positions going into the Fall.

- That's a large number, and trying to determine where 80 paras go across the District. Where would they go - including essential kids care or meals? Response: It is staffing for the school year, so not including meal delivery or essential kids care, with vacancies through spring and summer and have not returned, we are backfilling those positions, and some FTEs that have not been filled yet.
- For the paras that did receive a reassignment, how many? Specific to one location or throughout the district? Response: It was throughout the District, and there were some staff that were supporting meal delivery and essential care, and due to the funding and services, we had to reassign them back to buildings, and make adjustments to that.
 - When assigned back to buildings - is that literally? Response: That is back to providing distance support to the school at which they are assigned.
- In terms of distance learning, as we move forward on scheduling for synchronous and asynchronous, and expecting to be faced with adaptations for workload for students and teachers. If needing to make adaptations, will they fall within the parameters of the memorandums? Response: yes, they should. The parameters were baseline guidelines for schools and programs, and any shifts or flexibility, it should allow for that.
- The communications between the teachers and maintain a synchronous schedule - they are going to have to give feedback in how it's working and then make adjustments for the benefit of the student and teacher to ensure we have a reasonable balance between sametime and anytime learning. Response: There are some key determining factors, including what we heard last spring was improvement in the structure to set baseline, guidelines, and structures. There were so many great examples, but not as consistent as we hoped it would be. We do not expect for any teacher to be online for 8 hours teaching synchronous lessons all day. We are looking to establish a frequent, ongoing structures to put in place to build framework about how to increase and embed sametime learning, and accomplish it through connecting with students, whole class instruction to the entire class, small groups during the class, or students can have individual work during the time, and working with individual students, and structure day to provide attention or additional work. These are examples to provide flexibility but not overwhelm anyone in how we are accomplishing this.
 - Looking at a way to support teachers and reasonable expectations for them and their students. The MOU is setting up parameters to do that. Think we can work with teachers at the formal level through the union, but also through long established relationship between central administration, principals and teachers. Response: We need clear expectations and guidelines for how to support students, and translate that to strategy to work for all bargaining units. It's not always an easy balance, but we have been flexible, open and empowered to collaborate. Students and families need us more than ever, and find whatever we can to meet the needs of our students and supporting them and their families to the best of our abilities.
- In the previous presentation, talked about targets and targets in staffing, and how can we to begin to guess the staffing until what we know the percentage of our student population will opt to be in hybrid rather than distance learning? Our staffing will be determined by how many students will be involved in hybrid, and how many stay with distance learning, and how to predict that in advance to let staff know? Response: This is also why we originally went to distance learning, to have more time for precise data to guide our decisions. A lot of this will need to be based on those numbers, and health and safety guidelines, to ensure the scale is balanced. That's our work right now, along with the other 24 factors.
- How soon do we have an idea of what that breakdown will be? Response: We have the 25th and 14th on the calendar as the expected dates to provide a recommendation. Those could work a couple different ways - including a leading recommendation, and discussion, and whether or not to support. In some ways, there may be projections, and then work to get to the numbers in terms of

movement. With all the nuances and staffing and laws, there is a lot of moving parts in a district of our size.

- Regarding accommodations for staff, do we know criteria to gain accommodations? If it can't be provided, what options remain for them? Response: For ADA, it is a medical condition that prevents an employee from being able to perform essential functions or life duties, and an accommodation can be made. We are required to go through a process and meeting to talk about recommendations and determine whether or not we can make that accommodations. If we are not able to or they don't meet requirements, there is an option for voluntary lay off, or if they do meet the definition through ADA but we are not able to meet it, a leave of absence is also an option. We are not required through an accommodation process is to create a new position for staff that doesn't already exist. We did in the beginning of August send out information to all employees about this process, and received a small number of staff, but also that the year would be started in distance learning. Once we move to in person, we do expect those numbers to increase.
- Director Vue also noted that it will be important to communicate to staff so they have time to pursue this and be prepared.
- Director Allen noted questions that in the MOU, did we maintain the same contracted hours and benefits for all staff? Are hours being cut? Response: In the spring we maintained, regardless of work schedules through the executive order. We don't have the same requirements, and our commitment is to find work assignments for all existing staff, but may look different - for example bus duty. We didn't necessary maintain that because we are under different executive orders.
- Were staff notified of their changes? Response: Moving into distance learning, they should have that same amount of time. If we do need to reduce their time, we are required by the contract to notify them and go through the contract process.
- Were all building leads notified that paras would be available, and to provide a schedule for them? Response: Those are assigned through the building principals, and the understanding is that they have been communicated, and will follow-up. It's important to notice that all paras still under the contracts and need duties and hours - with anxiety issues, and to clear that up for them.

Operations Update - Prioritizing community well-being; Designing fiscally responsible and sustainable solutions.

- Facilities
 - Building Readiness Checklist
 - Goal of hiring 64 temp custodial staff by October 19 to support 4 tier cleaning / disinfection protocol
 - Space readiness (layout, signage, etc) underway
 - Distance Learning Support Centers
 - Coordination with Discovery Club, Essential Kids Care, hybrid stages
 - PPE and cleaning supplies reaching staff. Supply chain appears stable.
- Nutrition Services
 - Saint Paul Public Schools will continue weekly home meal delivery to youth throughout Saint Paul. Families can opt in/out at any time by visiting www.spps.org/fallmeals.
 - Meal pickup also available at Area Learning Centers.
 - Meals are available at no cost for anyone up to the age of 18, and those with a disability that normally participate in meal programs.
 - Families are asked to submit application for free and reduced-price meals, which supports funding for Compensatory Revenue, Title 1, and other important programs.
 - Nutrition Services is engaging with families to review meal program options and assist with applications.

- Transportation
 - 285 School Bus Routes have been developed for SY20.21
 - Routes will “Turn On” as we progress through Hybrid Stages
 - Meal Delivery will transition to midday at inception of Hybrid Stage 2
 - As hybrid stages advance, labor will be an issue

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Kopp appreciated the idea of learning centers as hubs for connectedness, nutrition - that’s really smart and something we carry forward to regionalize services so they are easily accessible for families. She also complimented the Nutrition Services team for the outstanding adaptations and responsiveness for needs, and inclusive vision to include all Saint Paul families.
- In thinking about the labor difficulty with transportation in a hybrid process, what are the proactive steps to prepare for that? Response: Our bus companies are actively advertising and promoting. We just need to keep trying. Through the transitions, we will know and fine tune our needs, and use that information to ensure our needs and numbers are addressed. It’s not all happening and once, and make small moves and changes.
- Will there be an impact to meal delivery with the switch to mid-day as we move to more in-person? Does that free up buses? Response: With mid-day, we generally have little problem with the gap between morning and afternoon routes. We see little issue there. We also decided to contract with our drivers at 50% of contract fee, which indicated to them that we still wanted to maintain a relationship and support business, and could use that money to fund their operations, and a collaborative way to ensure we have routes and drivers available.
- Director Marchese noted questions about as we are trying to get facilities ready, know that one of the things that’s difficult is for families and staff to envision what buildings will look like for hybrid or in-person. Is there a possibility to put together a mock building before moving staff or students, and either invite folks to come tour or a video of what it could look like? Response: The centers are planning and preparing and staffing for 100 students per day. Last week, we included the tours with building engineers, administrator on special assignment, facilities, and principals, and members of the team, and walked through the centers, food supports, technology service area. We did plan and map them out, and next will be moving furniture for students and signage and promotional materials. We are strategically staffing centers, and we can social distance and provide a model for families.
- Those are also opportunities to model in real time the protocols.
- In echoing to meal service, and passing 8 million meals.
- One other question was the waiver from the Department of Agriculture, so we didn’t need to count the number of students. Clarity on that and the timing. Response: We have a waiver through December 31st to use the model currently using which is not to require food delivered only to students eligible for FRL.
- Director Ellis noted the safety protocols at 1930 Como, and the intentionality of the meal boxes through nutrition services.
- She also noted that there was a conversation about the difficulty in hiring bus drivers in September 2019, and Director Burr was driving a bus route. Said 285 buses for routes developed, and 35 students maximum capacity and trying to think about what it means for bus drivers and starting with a shortage. Would we need more buses for the number of students allowed per bus? Response: We are routing as if 100% back in schools, but only 50% will be riding the bus each day in a hybrid situation. We usually assign 60 students per bus, and will naturally decrease due to hybrid. Last year, we struggled, but took on addition 3 vendors which helped us to revolve the issue, and hope those 3 new vendors also there for us this year to create a better situation. There will be 285 routes

distributed to 7 vendors; last year we started with 4 vendors. Director Ellis noted the excitement in seeing the bus drivers, and thanked the team for their work.

- She also noted the previously mentioned idea of a video for staff, students, and families to show the changes in facilities and expectations, and comfort level to know there are procedures in place.
- Do we have a number in terms for each of our building for capacity that abides by COVID regulations and rules for hybrid? Response: Yes, we have it down to the room, and depends on model and programming. For example, in our dining rooms, we would also need to use several classrooms as well and not used for instructional purposes.
- We are going to be serving meals in the buildings? Does that create a problem if delivering meals to homes? Response: We will have home delivery, and ensuring once students return, an additional option to take their meal boxes home with them on their last day of learning for that week. We know that there is not enough students on site for home delivery, but as we tier through, and more students return, that will be a viable option and help families. Our meal boxes are largely shelf stable, with the only perishable being milk.
- There was also clarification on the loading of students at the front of the bus, but students will fill in seats to the back to avoid walking past other students.
- Regarding the enhanced ventilation air filters, and how do these enhance ventilation? Response: That refers to changes in filtration media within ventilation systems and finer grain of filter to pull more particles out of the air. A large part of mechanical response also relies on increasing mix of outside air, and recirculating less, and scheduling systems to start 2 hours prior to the school day and 2 hours after the school day.
- The make-up of the building is taken into consideration for these changes, with the different layouts? Response: One of the recommendations is with smart systems to sense when we are dropping below a threshold, and override those and run systems constantly, ignoring number of people in the space and keep systems. Each system does take into specifics and spaces.
- With transportation, thinking about CARES Act and this is COVID related, can there be funding for that because we had to go under those levels for contracting with bus companies? Response: We could, but haven't chosen to yet to support with general education to currently cover it, but if necessary, we would be able to do that. If there comes a time, where we need to add additional routes, or utilize CARES funding, we have set aside within the application.
- Director Foster also thanked nutrition services and the operations team, and full support of the hubs and fully funded community schools, and thinking about the future and supports in place for community. She noted her experience with the PreK boxes, and the procedures for 1930 Como. She also thanked the Technology team for their work, and observing their system for supporting our families. She noted that at every level staff are working so hard for the students of SPPS. As we are moving back and thanks to HR and Finance as well.
- Superintendent Gothard thanked the team, and see that this is one big organization come together in ways to continue to impress, and problem-solving. Proud to be a part of the team. Good first day of school, and know demands are to continue to assess and get better, look for ways to return to less restrictive model, and shared details to consider. Ask to continue to guide, ask important questions, and we need to push ourselves to think through everything we can and be ready to and be prepared. Our kids deserve that, our staff to deserve to know expectations and support, and our parents and caregivers are going through sacrifices. We are a community and put our arms around each other and help - we will prevail and succeed and do it safely and effectively.
- Board members thanked the team for the presentation, opportunity to learn and ask questions, and that the community continues to learn with us as well. Talked through concerns of community and continue to do so. Heard sincere and honest responses. Thanks for continued work and passion for education. Great to see staff and thanks for meeting, and responsibility to community to ask

questions to have the community hear and informed, and know District is doing this work and appreciation for time and dedication, and diligence.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:39 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