

**MEETING MINUTES  
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING  
August 7, 2019**

PRESENT: Board of Education: Z. Ellis, J. Schumacher, M. Vanderwert, J. Foster, M. Xiong, J. Brodrick

S. Marchese arrived at 4:35 p.m.

Staff: Superintendent Gothard, M. Hoerth, N. Paez, M. Pope, K. Kimani, A. Schilling, H. Kilgore, A. Collins, J. Delich, B. Chan, H. Ott, C. Long, D. Watkins, C. Baker, E. Agbamu, M. Doud, M. Schrul, K. Burns, L. Cathey, M. Yackley, C. Grady, S. Dahlke

Other: T. Lonetree, J. Verges, F. Simer

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. AGENDA**

A. Superintendent's Announcements

Superintendent Gothard welcomed everyone to the meeting, and shared his time in the community for National Night Out on August 6<sup>th</sup>. There was great community engagement, with the Placement Center at sites to welcome families to SPPS and engage families for school placement options.

Admin Academy began today, with 200 leaders in the District, and a great day of learning and meeting with staff. It was a great day to ground ourselves in the strategic plan and what we know will lead to successful implementation. He thanked staff and the collaborative way we shared in an adaptive and engaging way with energy in the room, and great learning, and people seemed excited to be back. There will also be another day of learning tomorrow (Friday), at the University of St. Thomas, who are great hosts.

He also shared that one of the favorite events is next week and he will be canoeing with our American Indian incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. It was memorable to do the first time, and he ensured he was able attend this year, and it will take place next week. It's a great way to get to know our students, and fun to learn from them, their worries, excitement, and to learn about our rich American Indian culture, and to be on the river and seeing the city skyline and it's very special.

He also shared that at the August 20<sup>th</sup> Regular meeting, he will be preparing a formal resolution within Policy 211.02 – Board of Education Committees, and the appointment of a committee. He has made the determination that he will bring the recommendation of a standing Equity committee. Right now, that committee proposal would be a tri-chair leadership, which would consist of a board member, Superintendent Gothard, and Myla Pope from the Office of Equity. We will formalize the number of members, and from which group they represent in the weeks to come with more information as we near the resolution. A standing committee means there will be a secretary present, it will be posted and open to the public. We will look at it as a way to look at our policies, practices, results and strategic plan through the lens of equity to ensure our work is leading to systems changes that we want to see. It is an important way to ensure equity helps to energize and guide us as we move through the sequence of the school year, and what we want to do system-wide to produce a system that can better prepare our students for their

futures. Many district have Equity committees. It shows our community and staff that as a Board we are committed to the work of Equity in our District. This is a place for us to address and look at our work when measuring outcomes for our students and practices. In looking through past resolutions, these are not elaborate reports, it mainly gives the charge of the committee and sets the next steps. That could be the direction and work to come.

- Have we figured out a way to identify board member to sit on this, and whether it will be discussed on an annual basis, such as other committees? Response: That is to be determined.
- It will be important to have clear goals and purpose statement for that committee, and the guiding principles of what we believe for children and families and education systems, and how that will guide the work. It needs to be explicit. Response: Yes, the purpose is incredibly important. We would like the committee to have input on the guiding values as well and what those will look like. The board member designee to the committee will also be able to help to construct those guiding values and solicit feedback.
- Director Brodrick noted that he would be very desirous to be the representative on the committee.

Cedrick Baker, Chief of Staff, then provided an update on the FMP External Review Team. They have been working with and having meetings with staff members in Facilities and Finance. We are working ensure there are no barriers for them in reaching the goal of the report with findings and recommendations for the Fall – we are trying to reach the Board in October as the goal of the roll-out for the report. One of the items that will be coming up is more specificity around the findings, and answers to questions from the Board. We will be keeping the Board updated.

- Is it too later to consider additions to the committee? There have been questions from community about the independent nature of the members, and whether we should be going to the Department of Education for memberships, and diversity questions on gender or ethnic diversity. Do we feel comfortable with the membership, particularly the diversity and the independence of the current committee? Response: Director Xiong noted the team from the first meeting and requested more information of others involved in the work. The team consists of a retired assistant superintendent from South Washington, who is experienced in capital improvement campaigns and led building efforts. Also Steve Torgrimson, a retiree of Minneapolis Public Schools, who has experience in finance and capital improvement areas, and facilities. Kelly Smith, from Baker Tilly, is our financial advisor to the District and is also a member. Chappell Jordan is from Jacobs, a firm from Texas, and has a team of people and support, and has experience in supporting multiple efforts on capital improvements, and smaller school districts, with a variance in scale, and is leading a team of 2-3 people in supporting that effort. Don Mullin, from Saint Paul Building Trades, is also a member and has been having conversations with board members, and brings experience and perspective with his union role, and also as a White Bear Lake school board member. There is also a communications component of the team with Lynn Brun, who is supporting efforts, and has been instrumental with the website and key points, and current happenings, and has been on all weekly calls, as well as Kevin Burns, SPPS Director of Communications. There are between 7-10 people on the weekly calls, and 2-3 with Jacobs specifically.
- There were questions on representation from Finance. Response: Kelly Smith works for Baker Tilly, our financial advisor, and attends all our meetings. We specifically don't have anyone from Facilities and Finance to ensure there is an outside perspective to provide with a different look, and the team is considered a technical work group and working with the external team to provide information, data, and documents to make their findings and recommendations. It was an intentional effort to provide external perspective on what is happening.
- Director Schumacher noted the priority is to have people on the team that have experience in these different areas and at these levels and this capacity, and variety of different backgrounds, and it sounds like we have that. That is the most important criteria for evaluating what has been done and what will be done is folks who have that experience, and credibility in that on the basis of the descriptions and backgrounds.
- Wondering about the investigative process that's being followed by members? Expectation is that in the Fall, we would have a clear picture of how we got to where we are, exactly where we are, and where we're going to go forward. How are they going about investigating? Are they interviewing staff even

though they're not on the team? Originally our budget committee suggested an audit of our FMP and we turned to this independent leadership and review team, and they were going to do the same thing as an independent audit. Concerned about make-up of the team and how they will go about giving us those three answers. Response: In their scope of work, we discussed that – audit vs. review. We are looking at how we go here – this team is investigating specifically within Jacobs with different elements in their scope, and specifically with the firm, their goal is to provide a report out on how we got here. That is planning to be a part of the report, findings and recommendations to a solution. In looking at this as a system, the approach is and still is that we are in situation where something is not working correctly, and to do that with an outside perspective would be helpful. We believe we have talented people with expertise and experience to provide that perspective for us in this, and started the process of interviewing staff, information and documentation, and understanding systems, and goals is to look at best practices and experience and provide recommendations for changes. We will get there and the recommendations and findings will be helpful for the Board to see.

- Director Xiong clarified that based on the conversation at the first meeting, it's not that the team is working independent of the Facilities and Finance teams but alongside and with them to assess where we are as a District. It is this team that is external and will provide that lens from the outside looking in to the District. She noted that the folks started talking about the work right away and project planning. We have a lot of expertise in the room and credentials and experience. If we are not satisfied with the report in October, is there space for the Board to talk about how to move forward after that report back? Response: This external review team is not doing it in a silo, but working with staff members as well. The report out is to say what did we find, and how did we get here will be a part of the report out, and understanding that with their expertise and best practices and knowledge to ensure we are not in this situation again, and to fix a system with a lack of confidence, and to build that confidence back.
  - At the October report back, if the Board gives another direction or charge in the type of report back, will there be an opportunity to look at the team differently? Response: We have designed a purpose and identified a scope of work and asked people to join the team based on that. If we want to add individuals, it may feel as though we are changing the charge and direction, since they would have purpose with a distinct purpose separate from the current charge, and feel like we have it covered. As we continue on with a new direction is developed, we could come back and say the changes and reasons. In terms of independent and dependent, we do feel as if there is enough space in between from the calls involved in – they are outside our departments and working with our partners and vendors – this is a wide net in terms of who they are reaching out to gather information. The weekly check in calls are mainly for the team to get together to provide updates and what they will be working on, and the goal is to remove barriers to their work. Right now, they have a scope of work and a charge to look into the findings and recommendations.
- Director Brodrick noted that when this team comes forward with their findings, it will be a public event and the credibility of the team will be so important. That's why he stressed is the Board is comfortable with the makeup and diversity of the team right now, because the report receive in October will be important. We need to be prepared ahead of time for that. Director Brodrick noted that he is uneasy. Response: Administration can provide more information about the backgrounds on the team members, and if needed more detailed timeline.
- Director Marchese noted that the people participating should be able to do the work they have been asked to do. They seem to be given the charge that we've asked them to do, and we know a timeframe, and know the makeup of their background, and give them the opportunity to provide with the input and guidance, and when we get to the report, the Board can ask questions and assess; leave them in the space to allow they the work they need to do, and trust they are getting support and participation from Administration they need in their goal. There is a point where we can ask for updates based on need and timing; they are skilled and have the tools for the work.
- Director Brodrick noted that once the committee announces their findings, and we accept those findings, then the Board owns them. The main concern is that everyone feels assured that the committee has the charge, the membership, and diversity, so that when the Board accepts the report, that we are comfortable with that.
- Chief Baker then noted that within the diversity question, as of right now, there are mainly white males on the team, in speaking to diversity. That could be something, and that point is heard, but overall feels the team is doing good work, and confidence in their ability to produce, and feeling optimistic, and do hear the point about the diversity.

## B. Salary Comparisons (Board Positions)

Superintendent Gothard then introduced Laurin Cathey, Executive Director of Human Resources, to provide information on Salary Comparisons for Board positions, a request from the Executive Committee.

### **Data Points**

- Local comparables were selected by their relative proximity to SPPS
- All of the selected local comparables use a periodic review approach (Frequency ranges from 2-5 years).
  - Minneapolis Public Schools calls for a 2-year review but has not conducted one since 2015.
  - Anoka-Hennepin Public Schools calls for a 3-year review.
- National comparables were selected because of their similarity to SPPS in size and student demographics.
- Des Moines and Portland are volunteer positions.

### **Board of Education Compensation Review**

- Figures were then presented by board member title showing the baseline for SPPS, and compared to Anoka, Minneapolis, Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Osseo, and Saint Cloud, as well as Des Moines, Portland, and Rochester (NY).

### **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- In looking at how board members were determined to be on the school board in those cities where they are volunteer position, did we look at how they came to be on the school board? Are they appointed or did they run a campaign? Response: They are elected positions.
- The one point to note is the benefits compensation – do all school district mention something in a health plan? Response: From feedback from MPS and Anoka, they do not offer health plans to board members, and only mileage reimbursement to meetings.
- It would be helpful to understand in terms of the calendar on budget, what makes sense if we decide to move this forward, where does it fit in? Response: We can take the directive from the Board, and a matter of ensuring to cover, and to discuss the amount and determination on the most feasible time. Depending on the amount, that would be key, and depending on carryover in the fund balance from the Board budget and current vacancy with the board administrator position, and any dollars could be applied from the current budget to the request for the change in wage, and re-appropriate dollars. Also, separately from the recommendation made, that we encourage the Board to look at a regular process of review – it's an important topic and have understanding of how compared and assessed. It's uncommon for a district as large as SPPS to not have this conversation on a regular basis.
  - The last year that board salary was reviewed was 1988, and has been over 30 years since an examination in the Board's salary.
- Do you have information on the salaries of the city council or Ramsey County commissioners? Response: That information can be provided to the Board.
- With the research on the comparative study between practices and other districts, was there a sense of the 2-year or 3-year review cycle, what has worked and the benefits? Response: Anoka-Hennepin is the only district that is really implementing that with fidelity, and they speak to it as an easy process, that aligns with how they look at salaries across the district. The benefits are the transparency, with no downsides other than timing perspectives in terms of folks joining or leaving the board.
- Do any other districts use the raises or the wage or salaries negotiated with unions as the determination of the board salaries raised? Response: We have heard there is not a direct correlation, but is a factor of consideration.
- Chief Schrul provided more information on the fund balance within the Board budget, with a vacant position, and while we are still closing our year, at the time about 2 months ago in looking at the fund balance, there was approximately \$90,000 at the time, that would carryover as part of re-appropriation of fund balance and no additional resources would be pulled from the current budget, in addition to any current year budget for the vacant position. It was noted it is the board administrator position, which is active, but not filled yet, and at least 2 months of vacancy in the budget.

- Director Schumacher noted that this role does take a fair amount of time, and is city-wide. It's important to have people who have the time to service, because this is an important job, and the future of the city relies on having good people be able to afford to spend the time it takes to understand the issues and to make important decision, and partner with staff to ensure our kids get what they need. In looking at also no raise since 1988 and the comparative studies, he feels strongly that this is something where there does need to be an increase to ensure we have people who have passion, expertise, and who aren't going to feel that serving on the board will make it impossible to meet their financial needs. Also, in thinking about in ways of the amount in looking at the comparative figures and the amount in the budget, there wouldn't be an impact for 2-3 years to help mitigate that concerns. Think it's important thing to do and should make a recommendation at an upcoming Board meeting, and fill out specifics for the review process.
- Director Foster noted the health compensation package, and looking at MPS, and working to align ourselves, and include that as part of the recommendation overall.
- In adding the benefits to the salaries, how do they compare to MPS? Response: SPPS' is based on a percentage of the highest health care plan, so the Board received 41% of our most expensive health plan, and that number would be multiplied by 12 and rolled into the salary. We can look more into that formula.
- Director Vanderwert noted that she thinks it is time for us to do this, and that is why she recommended the Board to look into this.. This is important position for our kids, and the Board positions need to be attractive, and proposed at least a \$5,000 increase, maybe more, with regular review, and maybe tie it to our negotiations with our unions.
- There would need to be proposal brought to the Regular Board of Education Meeting to bring it back to an upcoming Regular meeting for formal action. Ask the Executive Committee to develop a recommendation and bring it before the Board at an upcoming meeting with a specific proposal, and a review process on a regular basis, and calculation of makes sense of the change. There is a Board policy on compensation, but is very minimal, and we would need to amend the board policy to require an interval of 2 or 3 years. Any proposal would be change in compensation and change to policy to happen to make the regular review happen.
- Director Vanderwert noted that tie to union percentages due to the hesitancy of the Board to determine their own compensation, and it would then be automatic and within the system, it would be systemic and happen, and be comparable and fair to other employees.
- The Executive Committee will make a recommendation and bring before the Board at a Regular Meeting.

### C. Saint Paul Safe Routes to Schools

Superintendent Gothard then introduced Mary Yackley, Licensed School Nurse, Supervisor, Student Health and Wellness; Carol Grady, Licensed School Nurse, SHIP Grant Coordinator, Student Health & Wellness; and Fay Simer, Pedestrian Safety Advocate, Department of Public Works, City of Saint Paul to present on Safe Routes to Schools.

#### **Solving Multiple Objectives**

- Benefits to the City
  - Advance the Saint Paul Bicycle Plan and Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan
  - Proactively address traffic complaints
- Benefits to SPPS
  - Reduce busing costs
  - Improve student readiness to learn: physical activity, air quality
- Benefits to Students
  - Boost physical and mental health
  - Arrive at school ready to learn
- A graph was shown that details the percentage of children walking or biking to school has dropped from 48% in 1969 to 13% in 2009. It also shared that most kids are not getting enough physical activity. Roads near schools are congested, decreasing safety and air quality for children.

### **The 6Es of Safe Routes to Schools**

- Engineering: creating safe, connected, and comfortable places for bicycling and walking
- Encouragement: fostering a culture that supports and encourages active transportation
- Evaluation: monitoring efforts to active transportation and planning for the future
- Education: equipping people with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to bike and walk
- Enforcement: building safe and responsible behaviors on the road and building respect among all road users
- Equity: increasing access and opportunity for all residents, including disadvantaged, minority, and low-income populations

### **Safe Routes to School Implementation**

- Partnership between Saint Paul initiatives and funding programs, including federal, state, and local.

### **SRTS Plans**

- Schools with completed SRTS Plans: Maxfield, Rondo Complex, Washington Tech, Ran-Ham schools, Farnsworth, Bruce Vento, Chelsea Heights
- Core components of a school SRTS plan:
  - Baseline info: student tallies and parent surveys
  - Identify walking/bicycling routes to campus
  - Recommendations for programs and infrastructure that support students walking and bicycling

### **SPPS Initiatives**

- Activities and staff time funded by the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) and MN GreenCorps (2018-2019)
  - Walk to School Day
  - Bike Fleet
  - Walk! Bike! Fun!

### **SRTS Steering Committee**

- Multi-agency committee formed in 2015; meets bi-monthly
- Regular attendees were reviewed, and included members from the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, and Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota
- Recent successes include:
  - 2017 Safe Routes to School Policy Plan
  - Application for MnDOT-funded Local SRTS Coordinator Position for 2019-2021
  - Application for GreenCorps member support in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020
  - Federal and state infrastructure funding awarded near: Bruce Vento, Washington Tech, Expo Elementary

### **Safe Routes to School Policy Plan**

- Completed in 2017; funded by MnDOT
- Recommends city, county and school district policies to support walking and bicycling to school
- Recommends ways to integrate SRTS into agency operations
- Highlighted action items:
  - Support coordination through a Steering Committee
  - Create a city-wide walking routes for youth map
  - Designate a SRTS Coordinator in each agency to champion program growth

### **Safe Routes to School Funding**

- Federal Funding – Federal Transportation Alternative program
  - Up to \$1 M federal dollars with 20% local match
  - Funds can be spent within 2 miles of school campus
  - Saint Paul has been successful applicant:
    - Washington Tech SRTS Improvements - \$800,000 (construction planned 2019)
    - Expo Elementary Sidewalk Gap Infill - \$400,000 (constructed 2018)

- Bruce Vento sidewalk, curb extensions, bikeway - \$800,000 (construction planned 2023)
  - Scoring criteria:
    - SRTS Plan
    - School participates in 6Es
- State Funding
  - MnDOT distributes annual funding to complete SRTS Plans. Past recipients:
    - Bruce Vento, Chelsea Heights, Farnsworth (2016)
    - Maxfield Elementary, Rondo Complex (2017)
    - Policy Plan (2017)
  - MnDOT distributes periodic funding for infrastructure investments
    - Up to \$300,000 capital projects
    - Funded by state bonds - no match required
    - Can provide match to federal grants
- City Funding - Saint Paul Public Works Five-Year Plan
  - \$125,000 in 2017, 2020, 2021, 2022
  - Past uses:
    - Implementation of school plan infrastructure recommendations (cross-walk restriping, bumpouts)
  - Local match to federal projects

### **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Do the grants include signage around the schools, as well as possible funds for bike racks? Response: Signage and bike racks are looked at in the Safe Routes to Schools plan. It also depends on the engineering recommendation. For example, the new crosswalk near Bruce Vento would have signage included as a part of that plan. Bike racks have been provided with SHIP funding that comes to us with discretion from Facilities, and knowing that as buildings are changing that bike racks are taken out of storage and placed in areas of use. We have also done an audit and inventory with areas that don't have bike racks, and where it is best situated for observation.
- Is plowing a part of this? Is there alignment with the City that once these Safe Routes are constructed to ensure bike lanes and such are plowed with priority around school start and end times? Response: We work with the engineer from the City for bump outs and structures. Plowing is always a concern, especially for students who are disabled and for bicycle riders, and we also watch for idling time for cars and buses because of the impact to our students, especially those with asthma.
- Director Vanderwert noted that as a walker, she sees sidewalk hazards. What in enforcement like to keep the sidewalks clear? What do we as citizens need to do to keep our sidewalks safe? Response: City ordinance requires adjacent property owners to keep their sidewalks clear of snow and debris. All of those are enforced through Department of Safety and Inspections and respond as needed. The first notification is to send a letter to the property owner of the complaint, and then has 48 hours to remedy. In many cases, they receive the letter and resolve the issue. If not resolved, the Department would remedy the issue and chargeback the property owner.
- Are streets designated as Safe Routes to Schools and monitor the sidewalks more closely, or all sidewalks? Response: If a school has a plan (the District has a plan, as well as individual schools have plans), they can make a recommendation for the safest route to walking. Families are provided information with options and maps for the preferred walking route, in terms of safety.
- How are the schools selected? Response: There are various ways, including assessment of District and City, self-selected, and have a plan because they feel strongly about it. The first three were selected based on concerns on behalf of Administration or families, and building. There are also schools that were driven by a group in the community wanting to do the work. Some schools do a Walk to School Day, where students arrive ready to learn.
- When talking about "group walks" and having an adult as part of those groups, in the past, Safe Streets was able to pay an adult to stand at dangerous corners, rather than have kids. In thinking about early start times, can that money be used to find some key places where it is challenging and have adults form those groups? Response: In this funding, it will fund a coordinator for 10 schools. We need to look at those schools and their start times to see what can be done for those 10 schools – since the grant is limited to those schools. The coordinator can then do individual work within each programs.

Funding would need to come from the site budget or be a part of assigned bus duty, in working with safety patrol and SPPD for increased enforcement during those early hours. We have also talked about using other wellness funds to pilot it, and has come up in discussion. To draw connections, federal and state funding are all designated for capital improvements. It's a perennial struggle to identify funds for other items like maintenance or programming. It's a big reason for excitement that MnDot has these local coordinator positions available for funding to help support education within the schools that doesn't fit within the existing funding.

- Director Schumacher encouraged discussion on experience with the plows and how they cover the bump outs, and if someone isn't clearing them, the whole street and crosswalk becomes treacherous. While it is a shorter distance, the plows do put snow on them. Ensure alignment with the City and District to create safe routes to school also in winter. Response: Noted, and that's a message to carry back to engineering as well. There are also temporary bump outs as a trial, and working with the community to determine those issues, and the role of partners, such as Major League Soccer and their contributions and role. There is a neighborhood improvement fund that we could also look into. The role of the coordinator will help us to explore ways for community members to be involved, including the bike trailer, which includes bikes for students who have special needs or disabilities as well, and the role in Phy. Ed. classes and adults to help students learn to ride bikes.
  - We've looked into stipends for adults to help students to learn to ride bikes, and have gone the volunteer route with a data base, but may need to look at stipends to encourage adults to help. The bike trailer is a popular item once it's used. With a continuum of students with riding abilities, we do need as many adults as possible.
- Do we encourage or discourage riding in the winter for students on bikes? Response: We do have requests for the bike trailer in winter for inside gym class, and has gone well.
- Director Schumacher noted that encouraging students to come to school in ways other than buses, also means encouraging kids to be in the streets, and if the streets aren't safe, it's a concern. This program is wonderful though. We also have 5<sup>th</sup> grade crossing guards, and there is a different cognition around safety for that age. Like to believe that we're appreciate of schools that advocate, and we know there are dangerous intersections and streets, and to be specific with families and kids about what we're asking them to do and how safe that is for them to do, is critical. The bike lanes in the winter may be frozen over and we need to ensure the safety of our students.
- Is lighting improved on those streets for students and pedestrians? Response: If there is a infrastructure improvement that involves traffic lights or if the street is within construction, it is aligned. While it is not from Safe Routes funding, it is aligned with other street improvements, and when other streets are improved and taken to consideration. That's the importance of a multi-agency collaboration to align recommendations together and future plans.
- Which 10 schools are included in this grant? Response: With the grant coordinator, it is for 10 schools, which may not be new to Safe Routes and may already have plans and keep momentum going. They are Ben Mays, Chelsea Heights, Crossroads, Randolph Heights, Phalen Lake, Bruce Vento, Battle Creek Elementary, John A. Johnson, Highwood Hills, and Maxfield. They are mostly neighborhood schools with a higher level of walkers, and target to improve the walking. Several have plans and others do not yet have plans.
- What is the accessibility in terms of bikes and locks to students and families, and how to support families to make bikes accessible. Are there conversations around that and the strategy to encourage families to be more active in terms of biking and walking in the neighborhood? Response: We work closely with Allina Health and their Free Bikes for Kids, and they post the event at Hazel Park and the Rondo building, and families can be fitted for the bicycle and a helmet, and hundreds of bikes have been distributed after Spring Break. Another conversation is to have a lock library. Schools have wellness dollars for a wellness action plan, and if they want to use the money to purchase locks. We've heard this from experiences with bikes left unlocked, and where bike locks would be helpful.

#### D. Policy Update

Superintendent Gothard then introduced Cedrick Baker, Chief of Staff, to provide an update on policy.



### **503.01: Homeless Children and Youth**

- We are updating the current Policy 503.01: Attendance: Homeless Children & Youth. It is being proposed that the policy be retitled to Policy 503.01: Homeless Children & Youth.
- Why do we have this policy?
  - To ensure that children and youth who are experiencing homelessness receive the same educational opportunities as other students who are not homeless; and McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and applicable Minnesota law.
- Why are updates being proposed?
  - To create alignment with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001
    - Children and youth who experience homelessness have the right to receive a free, appropriate public education
  - The services provided under McKinney-Vento provide families the opportunity to maintain education stability for their student, which is key to their educational trajectory and success.
    - One of the priorities of the act is the provision of transportation services to allow students experiencing homelessness to remain in their school of origin, which is defined as the school that the student attended when they first experienced homelessness.
- Changes include details on:
  - Purpose statement
  - General Statement
  - Definitions
    - “Homeless children and youth”
    - “School of origin”
    - “Homeless Liaison” – Project REACH and Fostering Connections
  - School Selection and Enrollment
  - Dispute Resolution
  - Transportation

Chief Baker noted the group had questions and conversation on rationale, why these changes, and other questions around transportation and student placement as well.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION: The Board approved this recommendation to move this policy, with the noted changes, to the three-reading process beginning at the August Board of Education Meeting.**

### **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Director Vanderwert noted concerns about the title and using person-first language throughout the policy, and a better title may be “Students Experiencing Homelessness.” Is there anything that prohibits us from renaming this policy? Response: It is a matter of trying to be consistent with statute and the language used and terms used across different entities and policies. The rationale was the connection with the title with statute, but there is flexibility in renaming. If the Board is okay with that, the title would be renamed for the reading process.
- There have been conversations in community around homeless children and youth, and particularly if there are some policies create barriers, so this is aligning with state statute and also removing barriers, such as children who are missing days and get dropped, and this process, or picking up kids outside the district so they can stay in their home schools while their family works with a liaison for stability and access to resources within their school and the liaison. A lot is alignment with state statute, and looking at potential barriers within our policy, and getting feedback on those and looking at legality and addressing those.
- In understanding the reference to “school of origin”, does that include our students who are currently enrolled in our school and live outside the district. Will this policy be inclusive of students in terms of “school of origin”? Response: The main goal is to say that if a student ends up moving, which in many instances of being highly mobile, that that student can still attend their school, instead of needing to be bussed to a different school with a connection to their boundary.
  - Should they move outside the school district, would this policy still apply? Response: Yes, it does. Our Project REACH team drives a lot of miles throughout the metro area, and are remarkable to

- maintain stability educationally speaking. School of origin speaks to the time of that status change, and when the family applies for the McKinney-Vento Act, that school is listed as school of origin.
- Director Foster noted that in this piece, Saint Paul is underserving its homeless population, and a lot of shelters tend to be full, and we are bussing outside.
  - Director Schumacher recounted a phone call with a parent who was staying in a hotel with three children and they were in three different schools, and trying to determine ways to have them together in one school, and we did solve it with Placement, and hope that as we understand the challenges our children and families who re experiencing homelessness, that we would be particularly sensitive in trying to arrange those things, especially with bus stops, and hope we can smooth things out and make it easier for them with the challenges they already have. Response: We have also gained insights and information from Student Placement, and in those situations or circumstances, we are working with families to make it work for them. If there are concerns of struggle, it is usually with schools in which there is a waiting list, and may be challenges with that, but we work with families around those challenges.
  - At one point, the McKinney-Vento had “highly mobile” in their language – do we still have that? Response: We do not currently. The federal department dropped that language.
    - That doesn’t mean we couldn’t have it in our policy? Response: We could, and in speaking with staff, we wanted to ensure there is a distinction between highly mobile doesn’t necessarily mean homeless, and to ensure that language in clear in this policy, and we can go back. The request is if comfortable with changes to the title and looking at that highly mobile section to provide a draft and move forward to the three-reading process.
  - Director Brodrick also noted that Director Foster spoke at the hearing at the City Council on homeless, where the active community group spoke, and in speaking with members that homeless is an important issue to address. He has noted to community members if they have feedback, they will have until October to note that feedback. It is currently available on the Board website under BoardBooks. Chair Ellis and others were also present, and gave great testimony – this is a real issue for Saint Paul.
  - These are our students that are often invisible, and it is time to bring them to the light so they are no longer invisible. There’s something like 400 beds for families in Hennepin County, and something like 65 in Ramsey County. A lot of the new spaces are for individuals, and not families, and another concern is for families to stay together.

### **III. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Marchese motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:27 p.m. Ms. Ellis seconded the motion. It passed by acclaim.

### **IV. WORK SESSION**

The Board then conducted a work session to discuss attendees and travel for the Council of the Great City Schools Annual Fall Conference in October 2019.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah Dahlke  
Assistant Clerk