

**MEETING MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING
June 12, 2018**

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

M. Xiong absent (illness).

Staff: Superintendent Gothard, M. Hoerth, H. Kilgore, N. Cameron, G. Ghery, I. Davis, L. Sayles-Adams, M. Dols-Klingel, T. Stewart-Downey, T. Battle, J. Turner, L. Cathey, M. Schrul, J. Engen, J. Allen, K. Lombardi, D. Ginther, C. Carlstrom, J. Kelly, M. Abrego, A. Collins, H. Ott, C. Baker, S. Dahlke

Other: J. Verges, T. Lonetree, K. Driscoll, K. McCauley, J. Kopp, J. Nathan, J. Nathan, M. Gilbert, N. Nox, P. Gaebaer, P. Joulia, S. Huges, M. Steyry, V. Alanis, K. Marin, L. Sandoval, J. Couillard

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:39 p.m.

II. AGENDA

A. Superintendent's Announcements

Dr. Gothard shared a quick reflection on the past few weeks of graduations. He thanked the SPPS staff and congratulated the graduating students. He also thanked the Board of Education for being involved in the ceremonies. It was a nice way to get a greater sense of the cultural values of our district, and seeing how each school had their unique ways to celebrate, and to see our families and their pride in their graduating students was a real honor. Congratulations to all our graduates, and to our staff and community members who made it possible.

B. Legislative Wrap-Up

Superintendent Gothard then introduced Mary Dougherty Gilbert to provide the Legislative Update. He thanked her for her work and time spent. She is also a very vocal person at AMSD; Mary is looked to as a leader in that organization.

What Happened?

- Major Federal Tax Bill passed in December
- Parkland school shooting in February
- Nearly 1,000 page omnibus supplemental budget with hundreds of policy provisions — created high stakes showdown with Governor — VETOED
- Both tax bills — included unacceptable corporate reductions and tax spending — versus individual relief — VETOED
- Bonding bill — one half the size of the Governor's

SPPS 2018 Legislative Agenda

- Focus on mandates — SPED work group, removed several unfunded mandates, hearings for EL, teacher summer corrections and SUTR

- Stabilize funding for PreK — base funding included in Governor’s and House bill, St. Paul provision in all three
- Expand local control — complicated referendum language was not included in either tax bill
- St. Paul Teacher Pension funding and reform — PASSED
- Increase supports for at-risk families — included in bonding bill
- Ensure funding support and flexibility in testing — some provisions Governor’s bill

Major Accomplishment – Pension Bill

- St. Paul Teacher Pension employer increases:
 - \$2.066 million in FY19 — increase 6.5 to 7.335 percent
 - \$4.529 million in FY20 — increase 7.335 to 8.17 percent
 - \$5.4 million in FY21 — increase 8.17 to 8.38 percent
 - Phase in up to 9% by FY24
 - Employee contribution increase of .25% in FY23
 - Plus \$5 million direct appropriation to fund
 - Reduced liabilities by over \$100 million

Safety Grants Bonding Bill

- Includes \$25 million in grants for school safety
 - Up to \$500,000 per school building for security improvements
 - First come, first serve basis
 - MDE — likely a lottery by building — applications will exceed revenue
 - One half must be outside of seven country metro area
 - SPPS team working with MDE and MN Safety Center

Bonding – and other Supports for At-Risk Families

- Housing Infrastructure Bonding (HIB) — \$50 million
- Housing Infrastructure Bonding for Behavioral Housing — \$30 million
- Public Housing — \$10 million GO Bonds
- Mental Health Crisis Centers — \$30 million
- Homework starts at home — not in final omnibus bill
- School linked mental health grants — in vetoed bill
- MA school social work reimbursement — continues HHS

Real Progress In Spite of Vetoed Bills

- Record number of legislators visited school sites
- Coordinated with education organizations to prioritize
- Special Education and EL funding reform — set the table for next session
- Multiple unfunded mandates were eliminated from final bills
- Other priorities, i.e. Teacher of Color, summer corrections also received hearings and commitments

Other Hot Button Issues

- Transportation Constitutional Amendment — didn’t pass
- Gun legislation — limits on background checks, loop holes for sale, age limits failed
- Transit — no bonding for Metro Transit in bonding bill or included in Constitutional amendment. Mpls and St. Paul
- Chambers have teamed up to lead transit discussion for metro area with broader coalition
- Met Council — governance change — VETOED

Upcoming Elections – High Stakes

- Governor — primaries in both parties
- Two US Senate seats — 35 seats up, 26 held by Democrats
- Four competitive congressional seats — Need to flip 24 GOP seats, keep 194 seats

- MN House and Senate Majority also could change

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Does the \$500,000 include services for mental health? Answer: No, it would be funding to improve building security; examples include updates to entryways and key card access. It is one-time funding.
- The Board also recognized Sandy Pappas for her work in the pension bill, which was one of the last bills to pass before Sine Die.

D. March 31, 2018 Quarterly Financial Report

The March 31, 2018 Quarterly Financial Report is an update to the Board of Education on the current fiscal year 2017-18 budget and includes a projection of Revenue, Expenditures and Fund Balance as of June 30, 2018.

A budget is a living, viable document. Once the budget is adopted in June, the Board is asked three times during the following year to look at and approve the changes that occur in the District's revenue and expenditures in each of the seven funds. The final determination, by fund, occurs each fall, following the acceptance of the audit report.

The fund balance accounts within the General Fund are prescribed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, known as GASB 54. The unassigned fund balance in the General Fund is the balance of 5% as referred to in Board policy. The fund balance in the Food Service fund is controlled by Federal USDA regulations.

The General Fund includes the five fund balance categories.

- Non-spendable
- Restricted
- Committed
- Assigned
- Unassigned

General Fund revenue is projected to increase by \$8.8M in the following areas: State aid of \$2.0M due to enrollment; an increase of \$1.5M in Comp. Ed. revenue following the a legislative formaul change; a projected increase in Special Education revenue of \$1.2M; Long Term Facilities Maintenance (LTFM) revenue of \$3.5M that will remain in the General Fund and did not transfer to the Building Construction fund due to State UFARS reporting requirements; and a projected increase of \$0.6M in other revenue.

General Fund expenditures are projected to be increased by \$5.1M. Some areas such as Facilities (LTFM), Custodial, and Substitute program budgets are projected to overspend their FY18 allocation amounts. In additional, the Intraschool fund is projected to have an increase in expenditures which is dedicated funding to student activities by site.

These changes result in a projected unassigned fund balance of 5.4%, which is within the 5% Board of Education policy. (The range of 5% is between \$29M-\$31M based on budget and expenditures each year.)

General Fund, Fully Financed: The Fully Financed fund must have revenue that equals expenditures. Revenue is projected to be under budget by \$8.2M due to lower expenditures, mainly Title I (\$4.4M) and Title II (\$1.8M) because additional funding was received late May. Revenues for Special Ed. and Early Intervening Services have a \$1.5M projected adjustment. The remaining \$0.5M is other various grants that have less expenditures than anticipated. No change in fund balance is expected at this time.

Food Service Fund: Revenue is projected to decrease by \$1.1M due to a decrease in meals served. Reimbursement rates have increased by 2% to assist in offsetting the decrease. Expenditures are projected to decrease by \$2.0M. Projected reductions are in labor, food, and supply costs associated

with the decrease in meals served and improvements in metrics tracking labor based on meals served per hour. Fund balance is projected to increase by \$0.9M.

Community Service Fund: Revenue is projected to slightly increase in the areas of tuition and fees. Expenditures are projected to decrease by \$0.4M in the salary and benefits categories. Fund balance is projected to increase by \$0.1M in the areas of Community Education, Discovery Club, and Adult Basic Education.

Community Service, Fully Financed: Revenue activity is projected to be lower than budget by \$2.3M within the individual Community Education fully financed grants. Expenditures are projected to lower than budget by \$2.4M within individual Community Education fully financed grant programs. Fund balance will increase by \$0.1M in the restricted category for Community Service.

Building Construction Fund: Revenue is projected to increase by \$129.7M from the following: 2017C Certificates of Participation of \$60.2M, 2018C Crosswinds Certificates of Participation issue of \$18.1M and the 2018B Certificates of Participation issue of \$52.5M. Expenditures are projected to increase by \$89.3 related to the projects funded by the 2017C Certificates of Participation, the 2018B Certificates of Participation issue, and an increase in Capital Bond expenditures related to the Facility Master Plan. Fund balance is projected to increase by \$13.8M.

Debt Service: Fund balance is projected to increase by \$4.1M due to the net effect of the escrow activity for bond refunding and the net change of revenue and expenditures.

Detailed figures were then shown for each of the funds.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Mr. Schumacher moved the Board of Education to accept the March 31, 2018 Quarterly Financial Report as presented. It was seconded by Ms. Ellis and Ms. Vanderwert. The motion passed by acclaim.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Where is the reimbursement rate of FRL in terms of an overall figure? Answer: We can get that information and send it to the Board on the current rate.

E. FY 19 Budget Update

Superintendent Gothard then introduced Chief Financial Officer, Marie Schrul, to provide an update on the FY2018-2019 budget to the Committee of the Board. She went on to review the plan on which the budget was based. Goal 1 is achievement for all students. Goal 2 is alignment of school programs. Goal 3 is sustainability to optimize classroom resources and academics.

General Budget Information

- The budget meets contractual obligations
- FY19 Revenue budget based on current law
- All schools do not receive the same amount of money per pupil because:
 - Some school funding is categorical (it has specific criteria on its spending)
 - Funding for Comp Ed and Title I follow the students on a one year delay (previous year's Oct 1 count)
 - Higher poverty schools have greater access to categorical dollars than lower poverty sites
- School enrollment affects the dollars allocated

Influencing Factors

- Fiscal Year end projections vs. actual revenue & expenditures impact fund balance
- Enrollment fluctuations impact revenue, class size and building capacity
- Contractual settlements impact expenditure levels
- Legislative adjustments impact revenue
- Previous year's October 1 Free & Reduced lunch count impacts revenue

- Bond ratings
- Inflation

FY2018-2019 General Fund Preliminary Big Picture

	FY18 Adopted (in \$M)	FY19 Preliminary (in \$M)	Difference (in \$M)
Revenue (current law)	\$ 521.4	\$ 528.0	\$ 6.6
Use of Fund Balance	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Expenditures	\$ 521.4	\$ 545.2	\$ (23.8)
Projected FY19 Shortfall	\$ 0	\$ (17.2)	

Additional FY19 Revenue from Legislature

Description	Fund	Amount
Safe Schools (est.)	General	\$ 500,000
School Safety Grants (application-based)	Fully Financed	TBD
Voluntary PreK (application-based)	General	TBD
Total		\$ 500,000

FY2018-2019 Recommendations to Address Projected Shortfall

Programs	Sites
Reduced Inflationary allocations (\$4.4 million)	Eliminate 1x only FY18 allocations of SSSC 2.0 program additions & legislative adjustments (\$3.5 million)
Enrollment related service/staffing reductions (TBD)	Enrollment related service/staffing reductions (TBD)
Vacant positions, staff attrition/retirements, negotiated contracts (TBD)	Vacant positions, staff attrition/retirements, negotiated contracts (TBD)
Targeted & 5% reductions (\$6.8 million)	

General Fund Budget Categories

Category	Description
Schools	Refers to all budgets for school sites in SPPS
School Service Support	Refers to program budgets that provide direct support services to schools (ex: Transportation, MLL, Special Education, Student Placement Center)
Districtwide Support	Refers to program budgets that provide support to all areas of the District (ex: Operations, Human Resources, Employee Benefits, Technology Services)

Administration	Refers to program budgets necessary to support governance, policy, and staff support to the Superintendent (ex: Board of Education, Superintendent, Legal Counsel)
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FY2018-2019 General Fund Big Picture - Expenditures

Area	FY18 Adopted	FY19 Proposed	FY18 vs FY19 Difference	Percent Change
Schools	\$ 247,365,968	\$ 247,054,701	\$ (311,267)	(0.1)%
School Service Support	180,513,043	188,012,225	7,499,182	4.2%
Districtwide Support	90,033,697	96,088,310	6,054,613	6.7%
Central Administration	3,533,366	3,575,871	42,505	1.2%
Total	521,446,074	\$ 534,731,107		
Increase in Districtwide Support for Long Term Facilities Mtc budget (in Fund 06 for FY18)	0	11,616,862	11,616,862	
Total w/LTFM addition	521,446,074	\$ 546,347,969		

Why a \$7.5M Increase to School Support Services?

- Chief Schrul then provided details for the \$7.5 million increase to school support services, including investments in special education, investments in MLL, substitute teachers, Indian education, Office of Leadership Development, and transportation. All other program areas did not have an increase.

Why a \$6.1M Increase to District-Wide Support Services?

- Chief Schrul then reviewed the details for the \$6.1 million increase to district-wide support services, including the Long Term Facilities Maintenance (LTFM) General Fund – Facilities Master Plan (funding tied to property tax levy), utilities and custodial (inflation and building expansions), SUTR program, employee benefits (district-wide), insurance, safety and security, and communications. All other program areas did not have an increase.

Staffing Impacts as of 6/8/18

Area	FY19 Proposed Budget	FY19 Proposed FTE Reduction
Schools	\$ 247,054,701	(66.90)
School Service Support	\$ 188,012,225	(13.60)
District-Wide Support (w/o LTFM transfer)	\$ 96,088,310	(25.63)
Administration	\$ 3,575,871	(0.95)
Total	\$ 534,731,107	(107.08)

- Chief Schrul then reviewed the detailed reductions within each area, including by bargaining unit for school staffing, by program for school service supports, district-wide support, and administration.

FY2018-2019 Budget Timeline

- The budget timeline was then reviewed with the below upcoming actions:

Date	Description
June 19, 2018	FY 2018-19 Budget adopted by the Board of Education

Board Engagement Information

- Principal toolkit includes:
 - Budget worksheet with supporting documentation
- School Budget Presentations (April 16-26)
 - Budget Video & Talking Points
 - Powerpoint draft that can be tailored to site to use with staff and community
 - Communications will have a survey for parents & community who attend
- Budget Finance & Advisory (BFAC) Meetings
- Business Office Website (<https://www.spps.org/business>)

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Discussion included details on the Special Education budget. The majority is inflation with the program size of SPED and the \$90M budget. In order to provide services to sites, we make the investment to not make reductions in inflation, and honor the salaries within the contract. The other piece was there was an additional investment of \$1M to increase the EA and TA supports in buildings, and the expansion of RiverEast and Early Childhood Special Education, and those are the majority of the changes.
- Questions also involved the budget of the MLL department. There was an increase in MLL staffing, and a reduction of staffing at the central office, with the reduction of 2 TOSAs and 1 cultural specialist. It's also important to note that in SPED and MLL, there are minutes of service and language levels, so staffing is dynamic. We are honoring the contract and what was promised, while being mindful and monitoring those staffing levels.
- The MLL staff who were at LEAP have been redistributed among the District at other buildings. We have also added new positions at comprehensive high schools.
- One reflection on these changes is that funding that is tied to the property tax levy is dedicated specifically and we cannot change the use of those dollars. They cannot be dedicated to anything else other than what they were intended for – the Facility master Plan.
- SUTR is coming from the budget because we did have a grant, and we no longer have that grant, and we are choosing to continue that program.
- The issue of the number of TOSAs, coaches, and specialists was also raised by the Board. Most of these positions are within OTL, and we have worked to streamline these positions when possible. The Board responded that when they see cuts to programs, there has not been the opportunity to see the number of people in those positions specifically. One question from folks at the BFAC and in the community, is that these positions are certified teachers, who are not out teaching in schools. Administration responded that while those positions are not listed as an employee within the building, they are heavily engaged in with work within the building, but may not have a physical seat or office at that particular building. Most are part of federal or local funding grant work, PLTT, or school improvement. They spend most of their time with teachers in supporting leadership teams, and their work is embedded in the schools. They are also involved in professional development to align the commitment to academic supports across the District. The number of these positions has decreased throughout the years.
- It was also noted that there is not a one-to-one correlation with the budgetary process in the potential cuts to these positions and the addition of staff to school buildings. The budget for schools is tied to the enrollment within those buildings. There is not a correlations in specialist and TOSA roles and the number of teachers. Title II funding TOSAs are related around teacher staff development and district initiatives around that.
- Director Brodrick noted that since his first role on the Board, the mantra has been to keep the cuts as far away from the classroom as possible, and EAs and TAs are as close to the classroom as

possible. Superintendent Gothard and administration responded that there are different funding sources, and the different discretionary dollars we have within the budget are different. Finance and HR work on the right amount of support for schools, and they are not funded in the same ways. The strategic plan may also provide different data points to allocate resources differently.

- Funding for staff development and state funding was also discussed. Superintendent Gothard went on to note that many times the best PD is given by teachers and staff. It is difficult to receive one-time funding for PD, and then once that funding goes away, it is challenging to get that PD back. It is a complicated funding system, with different resources, and we are doing our very best in terms of effectiveness and decisions in building each day to the extent of our abilities.
- The Board also noted that it would be helpful for the community to see the big picture, including figures on attrition and caseloads, and how that all looks, to see what we are doing to save costs and keep as much as possible within the classrooms. It may also be helpful to have a sense of the impact in terms of total numbers to understand the overall impact, or percentages of those positions.
- The role of assistant principals was also discussed. These positions are based on student population. The hiring process is based on criteria and leadership qualities, instructional knowledge, and a series of interview to showcase their talent. The hiring principals have the final say overall on the decisions based on the overall fit of the building and school community. Stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and community members, were included in the interview process. It was also noted by the Board that student input would be helpful in this process.
- With the number of specialists decreasing, we are now asking classroom teachers to provide these educational lessons that the specialists once provided. How are we supporting our classroom teachers to do this, while meeting the requirements from MDE? Answer: We are currently having conversations on assessments by building to meet the educational needs with focus on the arts, etc, and with professional development to see how that model looks building to building. We can set more time to follow-up on this.
- The Board also requested more information on the School and Community Service Professionals. They provide wraparound supports for our schools, including behavioral and instructional support. They can help our students with trouble points, or de-escalation, or partner with individual learning styles for core education subjects.

E. Policy Update

Access for PSEO Students – Policy 535.00

- New policy required by state statute
- Ensures PSEO students have access to their school and technology resources
- Work Group Recommendation: Advance to three reading process

Intellectual Property Rights – Policy 402.00

- New policy that was developed through collaboration of District and Saint Paul Federation of Teachers
- Policy covers:
 - Definitions related to intellectual property (IP)
 - Explanation of U.S. Copyright Act
 - Summary of the conditions for IP rights ownership by district and employee
 - Statement of exceptions
- Work Group Recommendation: Advance to three reading process

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Was the policy on intellectual property created brand new, or are there patterns or other similar policies in other districts? Answer: There are not a lot of other districts with policies on intellectual property. It was written in conjunction with Pete at SPFT and General Counsel. SPPS is a district that is creating and sharing work with both instructional and non-instructional staff. This is an opportunity to provide information for creating items from which we all can benefit._

- Discussion also focused on the consideration of rights to work, such as creation of curriculum items in different languages. Work that was done while being paid by the District would remain with the District. Those staff who are compensated for their work and are within the scope of employment, the rights of their work would remain with the District.
- Questions about the PSEO policy were also noted. This policy is to ensure students who take PSEO classes that may be off-site, are eligible to return to their high school to study in the library and use the facilities and technology. This hasn't been an issue within SPPS, but has become an issue in other districts out of state. It is the legislature's work to ensure this policy is enacted to schools to welcome the students enrolled in PSEO back into the school buildings.

E. SPPS Latino Consent Decree Program: 2017-2018 LCD Parent Advisory Council Annual Report and Recommendations

LCD Parent Advisory Council

- The LCD Implementation Guide task force was established four years ago with the responsibility to present, before the end of each school year, the updates needed to reach the objective of creating a plan for full implementation of the Latino Consent Decree (LCD).

District and LCD Program Long-Term Goals

1. Create a plan for full implementation of the Latino Consent Decree (LCD)
2. Go beyond compliance
3. Ensure that the Implementation Guide is created in a meaningful manner
4. Have positive outcomes for our Latino/Hispanic students and families

2017-2018 Recommendations

1. Counseling Guidelines

- The following describes specifically the district guidelines in regards to counseling and support in the schools to LCD eligible students. From that perspective, the LCD Council has proposed the following revisions:
 - Access to elective courses
 - Access to advanced courses
 - Schedule
 - Professional development
 - Program coordination
 - Monitoring graduation requirements

Guideline 1: Access to Elective Classes

- Encourage students to enroll in elective classes in which students who qualify for the Latino Decree program and / or who identify as Latino or Hispanic have not been traditionally represented.

Guideline 2: Access to Advanced Courses

- Encourage and advocate for Latino students to have equitable access to all types of subjects, classes and opportunities otherwise known as:
 - Career and Technical Education (CTE)
 - Advanced Placement (AP)
 - International Baccalaureate (IB)
 - College in the School (CIS)
 - Concurrent Enrollment
 - Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)
 - Seals of Bilingualism and other existing or similar classes
- A graph showing the participation in advanced courses (57%), AP courses (17%), and IB courses (32%) for Hispanic students was also shown, and detailed by total students and credits earned.

Guideline 3: Schedules

- Coordinate with Latino Consent Decree teachers in determining students' schedule.

Guideline 4: Professional Development

- School counselors will receive training and be knowledgeable of the Latino Consent Decree Program.
 - Training must be conducted by November 30 of each school year.
 - LCD program will be responsible for providing this training for counselors.

Guideline 5: Program Coordination

- Coordination will take place at the district level between the Office of College and Career Readiness (OCCR) and the Latino Consent Decree (LCD) Program.

Guideline 6: Graduation Requirements

- School counselors will monitor Latino Consent Decree students credit records to ensure all graduation requirements are fulfilled.
- The importance of the Graduation Progress Letter was also discussed, in language that parents can understand.

LCD Districtwide Parent Program

- Continue strengthening the collaboration with community-based organizations and Saint Paul Public Schools district programs and schools.
 - Parent Academy
 - Data from pre-survey and post-survey results of parents who participated in Parent Academy. The “Yes, I know” results increased significantly in the post-survey data.
 - CLUES
 - Latino Leadership Program
 - Special Education
 - MLL
 - Other

LCD Districtwide Parent Program

- The LCD Districtwide Parent Program would like to report that its 2017-18 attendance to events and programs reached a new high mark with 1,235 people in total. This is an increase of 224 more people than last year’s attendance (SY 2016-2017: 1,011).

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- What elective courses did you have in mind? Answer: Art classes come to mind. It would also depend on the personal interests of every student and which ones they would like to take. A member of the LCD PAC then recounted the experience of his daughter who wanted to take a particular class, but was told there was no longer room in the class. There is the belief that some students are led towards certain classes, and away from others. The goal is to offer all classes to all students in order for them to be able to choose which classes they would like to take. Historically, students of color have been funneled into more classes geared toward community college, and the hope is to ensure opportunities for students based of their interests, as opposed to what teachers would see as a best fit.
- Will that be included in the strategic plan? Answer: These recommendations fit into many different strategic initiatives, including positive school climate and culture, college readiness, and personal learning plans and collaborating with Parent Academy. We can create access to classes that interest students and provide support for them to be in successful.
- While the numbers of Latino students in advanced classes is around 50%, the goal of the LCD Consent Decree is to place Latino students at the same level as white students (who are at 77% for advanced classes.) While the number of Latino students in these classes is high, the goal is to have them hit the 77% mark as well. Latino students are bright and wonderful, and can be just as successful in those classes, but the needs must be addressed first in order to make that goal.
- In regards to the graduation progress letter, when do families find out about the letter? Is it district wide and how is it communicated? Answer: Currently, individual buildings decide on the timeline for

these letters and when they are sent to families. We need to have a tight timeline on when they are sent at a district-wide level.

- Parents from the PAC also provided insight into their experience with Parent Academy. They learn how to support their children to graduation. They also gain insight into what universities expect of their students, so they can also better support them. She explained her experiences with going to parent-teacher conferences and talking about grades, and with Parent Academy she was able to dive deeper in those conferences to learn more about her student's behavior and overall school experience, including grades. She also addressed how Parent Academy taught parents about the different apps that SPPS offers for students and families.
- Counseling staff also provided their experiences with the Latino culture. Many parents believe that education is entrusted to the educators. Through Parent Academy, we teach parents to check-in with school staff and advocate for their students. We always want more parent involvement, and Parent Academy teaches our parents to become more involved in the education of their students, learn what questions to ask about their student, and be an advocate for them.
- Where are we in these recommendations? Is it a matter that we are doing them but need to do them faster? Is communication the issue? Are there areas we can prioritize at this point? Answer: We would emphasize the importance of the elective classes and advanced classes. Parents told of their experiences where their student would like to take a class, but the counselor said their students wasn't ready, even though two teachers said they were. The lack of communication is also an area that can be improved upon. It's also important to identify the LCD teachers in the District to help the achievement gap which needs to be addressed to have better graduation results.
- How do counselors work together to identify and support these students? It seems like these recommendations are things we should be doing for all students. Answer: The achievement gap for LCD students is closing, but we still have work to do. Personal stories are really powerful. We need to tighten up our role in the graduation progress letter and with others in the District. We need to look at how we are creating and cultivating growth, and how we provide supports and positive culture for all students to make a positive PreK-12 experience for all students.
- Discussion also involved that parents need to be able to understand the graduation progress letter and be welcomed into our schools to learn more. We need to go beyond compliance and into how each and every student's knowledge and abilities can be best supported.
- Are there counselors with additional cultural understanding or work with students from different cultures? Answer: Language academy schools provide the best practice for our counselors. Our counselors also work together to progress-monitor and learn from each other on the curriculum to best support and serve our students. We are also engaging with our university partners to help in this journey to best serve and support our students.
- Discussion also focused on the graduation letter and the languages in which it is sent. LCD members responded that they may not understand the letter, based on the words used, or words that they do not know the context behind. Parent Academy is able to teach many parents about the progress letter, but not all parents enroll in this program, so they seek advice from other parents to help. All schools need to send the graduation progress letter in the home language.
- It was noted that this is an annual cycle where the LCD PAC presents to the Board in June, and administration provides a response in October.
- There was also a question on the statistics of elective classes that fill quickly and some students are not able to take them due to class size. That information can be provided. It becomes difficult based on timeline and requests by school. Issues can also arise when scheduling. The data can be provided on a school-by-school basis.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Ms. Foster moved the Board of Education to accept the 2017-2018 LCD Parent Advisory Council Annual Report and Recommendations as presented. Ms. Ellis seconded the recommended motion. It passed by acclaim.

E. Referendum Feasibility Study Results and Recommendation

Superintendent Gothard then introduced staff from Springstedt to provide the report on the Referendum Feasibility Study Results and Recommendation. The details of the enrollment campaign in collaboration

with SPFT, Select SPPS, will be shared more in the near future. He feels the Board and public will be very pleased with the results of the feasibility study.

Survey Outline

- Survey included interviews with 600 registered voters living within the boundaries of Saint Paul Public Schools.
- Interviews were completed between May 8th and May 27th
- Approximate margin of error is $\pm 4.0\%$.

Who We Called

- Interviews included demographic targets intended to provide a representative sample of voters in the district.
- Cell phones were tracked, but were not a demographic target.

Increase Operating Levy – Initial Support

- “Saint Paul Public Schools receives part of its funding from a voter-approved operating levy, which is used for educational programs and student services. The District is considering asking voters to agree to an increase in property taxes to raise additional funding. The increase in funding would allow the District to invest more in schools and avoid additional budget cuts. Would you favor or oppose such a proposal?”
- Initial supports show that 67% favored, 23% opposed, and 10% were undecided.

Effects of Information

- Participants were given three sets of questions about the proposed operating levy:
 - Potential consequences if the levy was not approved.
 - Potential improvements that could be made if additional funding was approved.
 - Potential impacts related to the District’s strategic plan.

Potential Consequences

- Participants were then asked, “I’m going to give you some statements about changes the District would need to make next year if the proposed levy increase is not approved. For each of these statements, please tell me whether the information would make you much more likely, somewhat more likely, somewhat less likely, or much less likely to support an increase in the levy.”
- Potential consequences included “reduced help for struggling students”, “reduced support staff”, “reduced staffing and programs”, and “reduced admins, aides, custodial, etc.” These had effects of much more or somewhat more support at 64.8% and higher.

Potential Improvements

- Participants were then asked, “I’m going to give you some statements about changes the District would be able to make next year if the proposed levy increase is approved. For each of these statements, please tell me whether the information would make you much more likely, somewhat more likely, somewhat less likely, or much less likely to support an increase in the levy.”
- Potential improvements included “more help for needs of middle school students”, “work toward middle school best practices”, “expanded PreK”, “improved safety and security”, and “improved discipline and learning environment.” These had effects of much more or somewhat more at 64.8% and higher.

Strategic Goals

- Participants were then asked, “Next, I’m going to share some information about St. Paul Public Schools’ new strategic plan that will be implemented this year. An increase in the operating levy would provide additional funding to focus on six goals related to student learning and achievement. For these six goals, I would like you to tell me if each would make you much more likely, somewhat more likely, somewhat less likely, or much less likely to support a levy increase.”

- The effects on the support levels for the strategic goals were then shown. The highest level of much more or somewhat more support was “increase academic growth in reading and math” at 82.3%.

Impact of Information about Levy Increase

- Participants were then asked, ““Now that you have heard more information about the proposal to raise additional funding for the District by increasing its operating levy, would you favor or oppose such a proposal?”
- The impact of information showed that Initial Support of 66.8% increased to 71.7%.

Impact of Cost Information – Levy Increase

- Participants were asked about four potential property tax increases: \$75, \$100, \$125, and \$150 per year.
- To preclude responses given in anticipation of higher or lower options, dollar values were presented in random order.
- Support vs. Cost
- \$75 – 78.7%
- \$100 – 71.3%
- \$125 – 58.3%
- \$150 – 44%

Grading the District

- Participants were then asked, “Students are often given the grades of A, B, C, D and F to denote the quality of their work. Suppose that Saint Paul Public Schools were graded in the same way. What grade would you give to the local public schools?”
 - 58% of respondents gave A and B grades to the District
 - 13% could not offer a response
- Quality of financial management, quality of focus on basic skills, and quality of focus on core academics grades were also asked, with similar responses in each version of the question.
- Participants were also asked how much they agreed with the statement, “Strong public schools are directly linked to the well-being of our community and strong property values.”
 - Strongly agree – 52%
 - Agree – 38%

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Questions were asked on the random sampling of people, and how the survey reflected a balanced group of people, so it was not weighted towards one group or those willing to answer. The questions were asked to different people based on demographic areas, and we were careful not to ask an overrepresented group of parents who may be more supportive.
- In looking at the demographics, could you speak to how closely you tracked registered voters in the city, and how close you were to the overall projections in each of the targeted groups? Answer: We were within 2% in each demographic category of targeted groups. Some people may fall into different categories, so there were different groups that could be checked off, making it not an exact match, but very close.
- Languages used in the interview consisted of English and Spanish. We explored other language options, however the costs were very high to add additional languages, and there was discussion on other ways to document responses in ways other than a survey over the phone. If a caller answered in Hmong or Somali, we informed them that we could only issue the survey in English or Spanish. If they were able to answer the questions in one of those two languages, the survey proceeded. Data can be provided on the number of callers that were not able to complete the survey.
- Superintendent Gothard then provided a message about this topic. With our final budget outlook, our positive community survey results and our commitment to the goals of our strategic plan, I believe we now have a clear path forward. Here's what we know:
 - Our budget is designed to support our goals and priorities for students.

- Unfortunately, we – like most Minnesota school districts – do not have enough resources to meet all our needs.
- State and federal funding have not kept pace with inflation or increasing costs, forcing us to make hard choices.
- SPPS is the second largest school district in the state, but our voter-approved operating levy is among the lowest when compared to the state's ten largest districts and our neighbors. We're even below districts like Elk River and South St. Paul.
- If state funding had kept up with inflation over the past 15 years, the District would have received \$600 more per student this year - which would amount to \$21 million this year alone. That's a lot of money that could be helping our students.
- The people of St. Paul have high aspirations for SPPS and want to support us.
- As we saw in the community survey results... nearly 60 percent of people would grade the District with an A or B.
- They also support the vision being outlined in our strategic planning process.
- And an overwhelming majority of St. Paul residents say strong schools are directly linked to the well-being of our community.
- We can always improve, and our community and our neighbors are ready to help us get there.
- The Board has made more than \$50 million dollars of budget cuts in the past three years. With another \$17 million cut for 2018-19, we know this is no longer sustainable without additional resources coming in to help our kids.
- Based on all this information, would the Board like administration to bring a resolution authorizing next steps to secure our finances to the June 19 board meeting?

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Mr. Schumacher moved the Board of Education to approve Administration to bring a resolution authorizing the next steps to secure our finances to the June 19, 2018 regular Board of Education meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Vanderwert. It passed by acclaim.

- What would the next steps be? Answer: After the resolution, there would be time to work and define the parameters in order to provide a resolution to call for the election at the July 17th regular Board of Education meeting for the election on November 6th.
- Director Foster noted that we need to ensure our constituents know all that SPPS has done to be fiscally responsible within the operating budget, budget cuts, and to be equitable at all levels. This needs to be explained.
- In relation to this, there needs to be community engagement and vision of what people want to see in this District, and make the case to point towards the future what will be efficient and effective is going to be important. The district and education in general is changing rapidly, with technology a major driver, we meet to make the case to people and to ourselves that we need the ability to address those areas and the flexibility for students will be critical to this campaign.
- With the average price home at \$125,000, this funding would equal out to about \$17M at \$125/household. It would allow us to maintain, but not move forward. It needs to be a combination of this new money and doing things differently with existing money, and what we are doing to attract and maintain students. This can be the catalyst for our work, and there are synergies starting to come together in the timing of this as well. In terms of increasing enrollment, when we get universal 3K in the city, there will be a Birth to Workforce framework, and there will be ways in which we receive children born into the community and we want SPPS to be the greatest place to build their futures.
- Director Marchese noted that the referendum is in result of choices made by policy makers in the state, and with an environment of choice, and options available to families, the funding has not kept up with the need. It is the state's responsibility to provide adequate funding, and SPPS taxpayers are supporters, but it needs to begin with the state. The strategic plan will include a holistic review of programs and will impact the decisions that families make with enrollment.
- It is heartening to know that 67% of the population support this at first glance. We know this is important. There is a way forward to see that as an investment to be successful, and we are investing in our children.

- It was also noted that it would be nice to hear from more legislative officials in that they are being asked these same questions. It's important that we can sit down with state officials and knowing that they want their children or grandchildren to have the education they deserve, that we impress upon them in loud terms and forceful language that education funding is important for all students.

III. ADJOURNMENT

It was motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. The motion passed by acclaim.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Dahlke
Assistant Clerk