

**MEETING MINUTES  
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING  
January 13, 2015**

PRESENT:

Board: Ms. Carroll, Mr. Hardy, Ms. Doran, Mr. Brodrick, Ms. O'Connell, Mr. Vue (arrived 5:20 p.m.) and Ms. Seeba (arrived 6:01 p.m.)

Staff: Superintendent Silva, Ms. Walker, Ms. Bierman, Mr. Cathey, Mr. Peterson, Mr. Collins, Ms. Schrul, Mr. Engen, Ms. Battle, Ms. Allen, Ms. Cameron, Mr. Huffman, Mr. Hoerth, Mr. Clark, Mr. Navarro, Ms. Sayles-Adams, Ms. Osorio, Ms. Keenan, Mr. Duffy, Mr. Ott, Ms. Turner, Ms. Schultz-Brown, Mr. Parent, Mr. Munnich, Mr. Clark, Mr. Vernosh

Other: Mr. Vergis, Dr. Rinehart, Mr. Water, Mr. Baker, Ms. Huegle, Mr. Nielson, Ms. Waller, MKs. Danielson-Sellie, Mr. Stinson

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. AGENDA**

**A. OPEB Trust**

Representatives from the Wells Fargo Wealth Management Group provided a report on the SPPS OPEB Trust. The investment objective is a balanced one with moderate risk tolerance and a portfolio life of greater than 10 years. They provided a OPEB client summary comparing SPPS to 12 other OPEB trusts along with a review of the SPPS consolidated portfolio. They reviewed actions relating to the trust over the past 12 months, the receipt/disbursement history, the fund's performance since inception along with a review of the Investment Policy Statement. The return on the fund since inception is 4.61% with a target range of 5% to 6%. There was some discussion on the equity investment portion. Statute 356A governing OPEB trusts allows investments in some alternative investment options including equity.

The SPPS CFO stated there is a committed fund balance for the trust. \$3 million was uncommitted from this fund this past fall and invested into the trust. SPPS budgets to meet retiree benefit obligations each year so there is no anticipation that funds will be withdrawn from the trust in the near future.

The Wells Fargo report provided a printed market overview indicating US data included mixed results with employment gains but waning confidence. Forward-looking indicators imply continued growth with little inflation. Factors across Europe, China and Japan are taking a toll on growth. Domestic equity prices continued to advance in November while bond prices were mixed. Real estate stabilized while commodities sank and various hedge funds posted gains in November

Superintendent thanked the team that governs the trust and complimented them on the position the District is now in.

**QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Should the investment balance be weighted more toward equity? Response: At this point the District is making contributions to the trust and distributions will be made at

some undefined later date. The investment balance would be an appropriate subject for a future conversation. Any change to the investment balance would require a revision to the Investment Policy Statement.

- The return on investment of 5% to 6% is over what term? Response: Annually.
- Will there be a review of the investment policy relative to equity allocation? Response: Yes, Finance will look at the allocation method with Wells Fargo and will provide the Board an update following that conversation.
- A future discussion item for the Board would be its long-term investment strategy. What the Board's targets are in order to get to where it wants to be.

**MOTION: Ms. Doran moved acceptance of Wells Fargo report on the OPEB Trust; seconded by Ms. O'Connell.**

**Motion passed.**

#### B. Auditor's Report

Representatives from MMKR Certified Public Accountants provided a report on the audit of the SPPS financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2014. Findings were:

1. A clean opinion was issued on the basic financial statements.
2. One deficiency in the District's internal control over financial reporting with insufficient controls in place over salary and related benefits, to ensure a proper implementation of rate changes and timely reconciliations of applicable general ledger accounts. This has been addressed and procedures are now in place to rectify this area.
3. Results of the audit testing disclosed no instances of noncompliance that required reporting under Government Auditing Standards.
4. The Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the basic financial statements.

Areas of noncompliance were:

1. Instances of noncompliance with requirements that could have effect on major Federal programs related to procurement requirements applicable to the child nutrition cluster program for quotations that were not obtained and retained on file for one year.
2. In testing of major Federal programs the District's controls were not adequate to assure that it was not contracting for goods or services with parties that are suspended or disbarred, or whose principals are suspended or disbarred. The District also did not have sufficient controls in place to assure compliance with procurement requirements for bids and/or quotations for contracts.
3. Three findings were noted relative to compliance with Minnesota laws and regulations.
  - 11 or 40 disbursements tested were not paid within 35 days of the receipt of the goods or services, or receipt of the invoice for goods or services, as required by State statute, and did not pay interest on the unpaid obligations.
  - MN Statute § 118A.03 requires that if a district's deposits exceed federal insurance coverage, excess deposits must be covered by corporate surety bonds or collateral that has a market value of at least 110% of such excess. This requirement was not met for the District's deposit accounts at times during the year.
  - MN Statutes require the District to obtain two or more quotations for contracts from \$25,000 to \$100,000 and to keep them on file for at least one year. The District did not obtain at least two quotations for three contracts awarded during the year.

The CFO indicated all areas of noncompliance have been address and processes/procedures put in place to ensure compliance.

MMKR provided a brief overview of funding for public education in Minnesota showing a comparison of the General Education Aid - Basic Formula Allowance from 2005 to 2015. They noted the \$529 increase in 2015 will be offset by changes to pupil weightings and the general education aid formula that reduces the increase to the equivalent of \$105 or 2.0%, state-wide.

They reviewed financial trends in the district outlining the General Fund Financial Position from 2010 to 2014 in the areas of Nonspendable fund balances, Restricted fund balances, Unrestricted fund balanced (Committed, Assigned and Unassigned), Unrestricted fund balances as a percentage of expenditures and Unassigned fund balances as a percent of expenditures (in all years this was above the 5% required by policy). Cash flow was reviewed based on month-end balances. Adjusted Daily Membership and Pupil Units Served were reviewed over the past five years along with the change in students served.

Charts were prepared on each of the other operating funds (Food Service Special Revenue and Community Service Special Revenue, for the past five years as well.

MMKR noted in 2015 the District financial statements will need to reflect the major changes in reporting requirements for pensions under GASB Statement No. 68, Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions - an amendment to GASB Statement No. 27.

#### QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Payroll – is there back pay that needs to be taken care of? Response: There was no back pay as far as salary is concerned. This involved some teacher retirement and PERA/TRA reporting needing to be brought up to date. TRA rates changed in May 2013 and the table was not updated in a timely manner necessitating the need for adjustments to be made. PERA moved to a different system and those rates have been brought up to date.
- Was there a penalty? Response: There is a penalty assessed if the item goes beyond a certain time. Staff will supply that information.
- Has this been corrected? Response: Payroll has a process to update tables on a quarterly basis.
- Are expenses for interest included in expenditure line? Response: Yes
- Does there need to be a conversation about fund balance for food service and community service? Response: No, a policy is in place, food service experienced additional costs due to legislative changes
- A Board member reminded everyone the audit showed no apparent problems. She stated she felt comfortable with the quality of the financial team and controls that have been put in place.
- Another Board member stated she appreciated the fact deeper testing was done to identify areas that can improve, it is helpful and she appreciated the conversation so there is understanding on how staff is addressing improvements.
- The Adjusted Daily Membership and Pupil Units Served - how much of this was from changes at state level as compared to enrollment? Response: Staff stated there would be bigger changes in 2015's management report due to legislative changes made in 2014..

**MOTION: Ms. Doran moved the Board accept the audit report. The motion was seconded by Ms. Carroll.**

**Motion passed**

#### C. Update on Substitute Teacher System

The substitute fill rate for December was 82%. This compares to a fill rate of 88% the year prior for same time frame when SPPS HR handled the process internally. The required number of substitutes for December was 3,546 which is 9% higher than the same month in 2013 (3,255). At the winter break, with four complete months of data to review, HR sees that the fill rate has been lower every month than it was during the same month in the previous year, while the need was higher this year in three of the four months. Charts were provided showing monthly fill rates in 2014 and 2015 and the monthly substitute needs. The target for daily fill rate is 90% and the total substitute needs is up 13.5% over the previous year (2014).

There were 38 days so far in 2015 where the need exceeded 200 substitute teachers. This is 72% higher than the number of days last year with the same need. Teachers on Call was able to provide 200 or more subs 14 times this school year. SPPS provided 200 or more subs 12 times during the same period in 2014. In 2013, the average need for days over 200 was 230.5 with a high need of 295. In 2014, the average need for days over 200 was 242.3 with a high need of 296.

90% of unfilled jobs were requested less than 24 hours in advance. While need was influenced by iPad implementation, illness (self or others) remained the largest reason for substitute need with the flu virus approaching epidemic proportions in Minnesota.

Areas under consideration to address these issues include:

- Short-term: evaluating the use of TOSAs for the post spring break segment of the school year.
- Mid-term: Reintroduce the dedicated sub cadre by recruiting an additional 15 teachers for 2015-16. SPPS will dedicate five subs at each level. These will be full-time substitutes, classroom and/or area.
- Long-term: Restructure the PD delivery model to have less connection with substitute need while continuing to partner with ToC to build a substitute workforce.

#### QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- On the right is that teacher days? Response: No, number of teachers. The need could be for one day or three weeks. The numbers are influenced by teacher development.
- 200 per day is a big number. Response: Yes, the 200 requests per day is a large number and is difficult to address.
- Do you have any idea of the number of people who no longer sub because they do not accrue retirement benefits? Response: SPPS had a sub population of 760 when the change to Teacher on Call (ToC) was made, 366 went to ToC so 54% of the original population made the move. The top 200 teachers who worked on regular basis had a 94% conversion rate. Today the pool is at 564. Regular subs were not dissuaded from moving to ToC and SPPS addressed the concerns expressed. SPPS is now working on getting a population responsive to same day need. Student teachers are being utilized on a small basis but licensure is an issue in that.
- Are building administrators seeing a difference in quality comparing the SPPS sub group to ToC subs? Can this be measured to address decisions in the future. Response: The question can be asked of principals. Quality teachers with a commitment to SPPS students is the bottom line.
- In the long-term restructuring of the PD delivery model, teachers have family and kids, would summertime be a potential timeframe as evenings and weekends might be difficult for them. Response: SPPS is definitely looking at ways to creatively address teacher PD. It is exploring all options to decrease the impact on classroom instruction. On-line has proven to be quite successful.
- Explain fill rate again. It appears ToC is not doing as good a job as SPPS was, what is problem? Response: It appears SPPS was more successful in filling requests than ToC. The promise was for their numbers to be better however the need has increased substantially from the previous year and the need is outpacing ToCs ability to get teachers to substitute. Some days classrooms are short-staffed but administrators find ways to meet the need.
- What is being done with ToC to push them, what does contract say? Response: The contract does have a provision to pay a smaller percentage if they do not meet the benchmark, but with the caveat that notice needs to be 24 hours in advance. SPPS does get weekly updates on recruitment efforts to add to staff but there is a need to improve on the invitation to substitute for SPPS. SPPS is highlighting substituting as an opportunity to see if SPPS is a desired district for long-term employment.
- It was noted there is an opportunity with teacher retirement meetings to recruit people to substitute What needs to be done (i.e. License renewal, etc.) would have to be clarified. Hearing the request from SPPS is very important. ToC has implemented "advance

requisitions" recognizing the 24 hour need. Advance requisition opens up 30 requisitions per day so staff will be available.

- What about pay rates? Response: The short term rate is competitive but the long-term lags significantly from the market. This is a contract issue.
- A Board member stated she would be glad to see pay comparability for long-term and in subsequent information would like to hear about the dynamics and issues of short-term vs. long-term subs. Has there been a change in the reasons why substitutes are being requested? Response: SPPS is tracking to see what major influences might be in order to anticipate needs.
- The Board requested this information be gotten out to be shared with teachers so they have the information as this affects them the most. They want to know what is going on.
- Director Hardy asked that responses to his questions posed to the Superintendent in this area be provided by next week's Board meeting.
- Board members were instructed to send follow up questions to the Superintendent.

D. Long Range Demographic Study

The enrollment projection analysis focused on the factors that influence K-12 regular enrollment without PreK, ALCs, ECFE and Specialized Programs. It quantifies Kindergarten enrollment, cohort survival and net migration of students in each grade and the impact of housing types and development. The next phase of the analysis will refine the student profile, factoring in race and poverty information and will project enrollment school-by-school, not just by geographic areas.

In the past 10 years, enrollment has decreased by 1,734 students or 4.6%. Resident enrollment decreased only 2.8% and was at its lowest in 2010-11. Since then resident enrollment has increased as has the size of the resident Kindergarten class. In 2014-15, nonresidents make up 4.3% of K-12 enrollment and are concentrated in the elementary grades. The estimated school age population decreased as well during the recession years.

Today, SPPS captures 62.4% of the district's school age population or 65.6% when special programs are included. The largest number of students not attending SPPS attend traditional nonpublic schools and charter schools. SPPS experiences net out migration every year. The net outflow between Grades 5 and 6 is unusual. Like most Minnesota public schools, there is a net inflow between Grades 8 and 9.

Enrollment is projected to increase 4.2 to 8.2% in the next 10 years. In 2024-25, projected enrollment ranges from 37,551 to 38,983 students. This compares to 36,040 students in 2014-15. Approximately 1,800 students need to be added to these projections to reflect ALCs, special education and other special populations not projected. Enrollment will increase by no less than 400 students in the next five years. Growth is faster in the second five projection years as the number of Kindergarten students increases.

The City of St. Paul estimates that 2,600 multi-family units will be built in the next five years. Only 10% of these units will be subsidized; others will be senior housing or market rate units. Probably no more than 55-105 SPPS students would be from these developments.

Many factors are changing, today, enrollment results from

- Demographic changes (age of population, fertility rates and amount of residential development).
- Education marketplace with many education choices - nonpublic, public (open enrollment, charter schools, ALCs, etc.)

SPPS has some advantages; the city and school district are coterminous (no conflicts in identity) and the school district's shape and natural boundaries are barriers to open enrollment out.

In the past 10 years, components of enrollment change have included:

- Natural increase results in a gain of 6,614 students (the district has young families with children)
- Net migration results in a loss of 8,348 students - families moved out of the district while children are young, students transfer to charter schools (charter enrollment has doubled in the past 10 years), students leave before entering middle school, students return for high school and students transfer to ALCs.

Macro trends show:

- An aging population with less mobility, a decrease in school age population per household and a shift in the size of adult age groups (less demand for single family detached housing, which yields the most school age population).
- More births this decade and the next (Gen Y) resulting in another enrollment cycle (third) with rising elementary enrollment in the first half of the cycle and another large graduating class about 2040 (end of cycle).

Current elementary and middle school grade sizes suggest that enrollment will continue to increase modestly if Kindergarten is near today's level. Average grade size would approximate 3,079 K-5, 2,459 6-8 and 2,548 9-12. Charts were provided showing:

- Net migration by grade
- Enrollment projections
- 5 year enrolled resident projections by area
- 5 year rolled resident projections - change in enrolled residents
- Housing yields
- Projection comparisons (cohort survival and housing units)

These projections will impact the FMP by aligning capacity and projected enrollment across the city, providing context on student profile and factors that influence student migration and inform milestones for critical interventions. It will aid in SPPS having the right school at the right time.

The FMP will plan to the highest enrollment as conservative assumptions lead to the most robust long-range plan. The variance between lowest and highest projections from the report are modest in a facilities context (functional capacity). SPPS is on a very stable and predictable trajectory save unanticipated immigration.

Through the Facilities Master Planning process, SPPS is working with a broad cross-section of internal and external stakeholders to develop the criteria the district will use to guide facility projects and improvements over the next decade. In order to produce a sound 10-year plan, the district must extend the short-term models it has used for enrollment projections.

Historically SPPS has used a one-year projection model to inform annual budgeting, programming and other decisions. This serves its purpose for annual resource allocation and student placement but is not enough to address long-term planning needs such as facilities and programming. Staff provided a handout outlining the new 10-year District Enrollment Forecasting Model that covered what, why, how (use of two projection models), the timeline and questions needing to be considered.

#### QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- The consultant noted in the area of education choices SPPS is doing very well with open enrollment. A larger challenge is charter schools. It takes a large population base to start another school and that can occur in any location within the district. SPPS needs to know where these are located, what their specialty is and how it is marketed. It also needs to begin to anticipate community needs and address those.
- As look at history of charter schools in St. Paul the numbers have increased rapidly within the last 10 years, their enrollment has doubled over that time.



- In the original SSSC the plan was to capture a percent of market share and then realized that was an unrealistic goal and revised it. SPPS has not achieved that goal, do those students exist? Response. The consultant urged SPPS not to set goals as this is a very complex environment and goals are hard to make happen in abstract. People will find something in every option offered at least for a time. She recommended SPPS offer what parents want as it is easier to prevent a charter from opening than to get students back once they are attending a charter.
- Is there any data you wished you had to help with additional information? Response: There is more data than can be analyzed and comprehended. Some questions raised will require tracking actual students but the district can do that. SPPS has very good data and staff capable of getting it out.
- In data tracking specific students is that knowing why they left the district? Response: No, that is questionable data at best because people do not always provide a true answer or provide a nuance one that can be misinterpreted. An example would be MDE will not share names and addresses of charter school students with SPPS but SPPS can match students under open enrollment.
- Is there much success using exit interviews? Response: Again, experience shows the responses are to be taken with a grain of salt, if people are really unhappy they will tell you but it is difficult to interpret reasons given.
- A challenges in St. Paul is it does not have a supply of housing units in a form desired by the younger population.
- A Board members stated she looked forward to do further assessment and subsequent deeper analysis.
- Can SPPS track enrollment and migration by race and income? Response: Yes, that is planned for the second round.
- When births declined due to the recession, the decline in Minnesota came from Hispanic and Asian women. When you look at the estimated fertility rates for white women it is below 2.11 children. As result of the recession Hispanic and Asian women have fertility rates close to replacement. The question is whether that will continue or will there be bounce back to former rates.
- A Board member noted there are assumptions out in the community that do not match with the data gathered. Response: The data are good valid data. The fact is the perceptions out there do not match reality.
- What happened to the data used for the original SSSC? Response: That data is still available and has been used as a basis for further data collection/interpretation.

E. Standing Item: Policy Update

1. **Gender Inclusion Policy**

The presentation began with a few definitions.

- Gender Identify – a person’s deeply held sense or knowledge of their own gender.
- Cisgender – a person’s gender identity matches their biological sex
- Transgender -- an adjective describing a person whose gender identity or expression is different from that traditionally associated with the sex at birth.

The Policy Work Group began meeting on the Gender Inclusion Policy in February, 2014. The inquiry into this policy was the result of:

- The denial of access to participation in high school athletics for a transgender student due to prior MSHSL guidelines.
- The MSHSL beginning a Transgender student athlete policy study
- Increasing concerns from SPPS youth about harassment and discriminatory practices and marginalization.
- A continual effort to create and support an equitable learning environment for all students.

The work group consulted numerous resources during its research phase (local, state and national organizations, districts and states across the nation and students, families,

teachers and administrators). The draft policy is the result of outreach efforts and is grounded in student voice.

The rationale for the policy is based on transgender and gender nonconforming students reporting staggering levels of bullying, harassment (78%) , violence (36% physically assaulted and 12% sexually assaulted) and intimidation (data is based on a national study).. 51% of students who experienced harassment, physical or sexual violence reported attempting suicide.

Transgender and gender nonconforming students in SPPS reported:

- A lack of access to facilities resulting in an increased rate of health issues such as urinary tract infections
- Violations of personal privacy and data privacy
- Intimidation from peers and some adults
- A higher level of homelessness
- A lack of respect and understanding of gender identity and gender expression from adults
- A fear of harassment and discrimination from intentional or unintentional outing.

These SPPS students asked

- To be treated with dignity
- Have their humanity seen
- For consistent use of preferred names and pronouns
- For equitable access to facilities
- Adults to rethink arbitrary groupings based upon sex and
- To have their truth heard and understood.

There are many legal precedents covering gender identification. In the Minnesota Human Rights Act, sexual orientation is defined as "having or being perceived as having a self-image or identity not traditionally associated with one's biological maleness or femaleness". (363A.03). It also states "it is unfair and discriminatory practice to deny any person the full and equal enjoyment of the services, facilities, privileges and accommodations of a place of public accommodation because of race, color.....sexual orientation, or sex. (363A.11). And, it further states, "it is an unfair discriminatory practice to discriminate in any manner in the full utilization of or benefit from any educational institution, or the services rendered thereby to any person because of race, color.....sexual orientation or disability. (363A.13).

Under the Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972, the sex discrimination extends to claims of discrimination based on gender identity or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity and OCR accepts such complaints for investigation. Similarity of the actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity of the parties does not change a school's obligation. (US Department of Education, 4/29/2014).

Best reading of the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act's prohibition of sex discrimination is that it encompasses discrimination based on gender identity, including transgender status. (Attorney General Eric Holder, 12/15/2014).

Other legal precedents include the Jane Doe et al. v. Regional School Unit 26 (2014) wherein the school allowed Jane Doe, a transgender 5th grade girl, to use the girls' bathroom. A cisgender boy, under encouragement from his grandfather who disagreed with the school, followed Jane Doe into the girls' restroom claiming that he too should be allowed to use the girls' bathroom. The school revoked Jane Doe's access to the girls' facilities requiring her to use the staff, single stall bathroom. The Maine Supreme Court interpreted Maine's Human Rights Act to extend protection of equal access to facilities to include gender identity. It ruled in favor of Jane Doe and awarded \$75,000.



In another instance, DOE and DOJ Resolution Agreement with Arcadia Unified School District (2013) the district denied a student's (a transgender boy) access to sex-specific facilities designated for male students at school for use during school and extracurricular activities and sex-specific student cabins for male students during a school-sponsored overnight academic camp. The district entered agreement mandating that they allow access to sex separated facilities and programming for students that best align to students' gender identify and expression.

The tenets of the SPPS draft policy have been created and grounded in student voice as well as family, teacher and administrator outreach. Policies are only as effective as their implementation and support structures allow. Procedures are being developed concurrently during policy development and the three reading process. Tenets are:

- 1) Respect all students' gender identity and gender expression by honoring the right of students to be identified and addressed by their preferred name and pronoun.
- 2) Prohibit, within academic programming, the separation of students based upon gender unless it serves as a compelling pedagogical tool.
- 3) Provide all students the opportunity to participate in co-curricular and extracurricular activities including, but not limited to, intramural and interscholastic athletics, in a manner consistent with their gender identity.
- 4) Provide all students access to facilities that best align with students' gender identity.

#### QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Policy is spot on – this is exactly what needs to be done for kids and families.
- A Board member noted regarding accommodation, that SPPS will have to be flexible. Particularly when providing access to facilities that best align. Will there be accommodation for cisgender and transgender? Response: The issue is to understand this policy and procedure is for all students, this is a gender inclusion policy. It will take time to address individual facilities but everyone needs to be able to use the facilities irregardless. Procedures will match the policy intent. As we move forward with tenants about equity, justice and the law – it is not finding something that makes everyone comfortable. We must keep centrality in mind – it is the right thing to do and work toward finding a way to transition to support for all. It is about finding respectful ways to move forward.
- Are we trying to attempt to change a mindset and values. This is an inclusion policy but it has to be based on love and respect and as we implement policy and procedures we need to extend respect to all involved.
- Another Board members stated she welcomed the policy and it is time to implement it. She stated she was willing to hear respectful and constructive dialogue but not rumor mongering and misinformation.
- A comment was made the District is being transparent and it wants community to help define procedures. It needs constructive help in building procedures.
- How many districts have this type of policy? Response: In Minnesota, Minneapolis has similar tenets spread over several policies. This is a bold move for SPPS and is an opportunity for the Board to speak as a body to help a portion of SPPS student population. As we work through this we will hear many perspectives. The bottom line is what can be done to ensure every student feels safe and will be treated equally regardless of gender. We need help in accomplishing this in a way to move forward for students, families, etc.
- What are the numbers of transgender youth? Response: We do not have a number. Nationally it is approximately 1 in 250 to 1 in a 1000. SPPS does have transgender students in PreK through high school.
- What is the plan on concurrent procedures? I presume SPPS will shape procedures at the same time, what is different for the Board? Response: Nothing, the Board looks at policy and instructs administration to do procedures.
- We want to ensure there is space for everyone in SPPS.

- Thanks to the staff, students and families who contributed their perspectives, ideas and work to translate all this into policy and apologies that SPPS has not had this policy previously. Work will continue to develop procedures that help to address questions along the way and define all bases as we move forward.
- The Superintendent stated that as an organization SPPS should expect those who work for district to be willing to change behaviors and actions while recognizing it is hard to change values and beliefs.

**MOTION: Ms. Doran moved the Board of Education move the Gender Equity Policy to its first reading at the January 20, 2015 Board of Education meeting. Ms. Carroll seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed.**

**F. Talent Development and Accelerated Services (TDAS) Update**

The Assistant Director of the Office of Teaching and Learning presented the TDAS update. He began by stating major activities within the department for 2014-15 included:

- Refinement of student learner and identification (CogAT7)
- Revision of the Portfolio review process (standards and performance-based)
- Auditing the assessment process and calendar
- Updating procedures for family, community and school site engagement and communication
- Shifting from a Gifted and Talented (G/T) model to a Talent Development Model

The CogAT7 administration timeline was reviewed during opening week with site staff and changes were made based on their input. Kindergarten students took the screener. REA developed the suggested administration window to avoid overlapping grade testing processes and testing practice materials were translated into Hmong, Karen and Somali by the SPPS Translation Department (Spanish was provided by Riverside). A flow chart of the identification/assessment process was provided to the Board.

There are several pathways to identification for accelerated services:

- Second grade norms - the top 10% in each battery district (Q, V, N) and top 10% composite at the building level.
- Kindergarten norms - the top 10% composite at district and building (The use of the Kindergarten screener required the use of the overall score rather than the discrete batteries.)
- Portfolio review process (K-5)

For "not identified" students the CogAT7 provides accelerated site-based opportunities (an individualized learning plan and profile).

In 2014-15 there were 6,105 students tested along with 23 non-SPPS students tested. 1,182 were identified as eligible for accelerated services and 224 were recommended from portfolio. A chart breaking results out by ethnicity and by Kindergarten, second grade, all other grades and all grades was provided comparing the last four years' numbers. A second chart was provided breaking results for 2014-15 down by Kindergarten, second grade, all other grades and all grades and by gender, ethnicity, home language, ELL, Special Ed and lunch status.

Future steps include:

- Support for alignment of accelerated services district-wide to provide foundational offerings with fidelity for all students
- Engaging communities in the development of culturally relevant practices to enhance students' academic success
- Continuation of the use of multiple measurements to illustrate and enhance students talents and gifts through the talent development model and

- Deepening Elementary and Middle schools' opportunity pathways to increase student preparation.

Areas for future consideration involve:

- Finding a better balance between access to services across the system versus access at particular schools
- Review of the role of testing for identification: time spent on testing students, especially Kindergarten, for identification purposes; the utility of the Kindergarten screener (does not have much utility beyond identification for Capitol Hill eligibility); building a culture where CogAT results are used for more than eligibility for specialized services or enrollment and review of the multi-year impact of CogAT on identification trends and providing recommendations in SY 15-16 regarding future implementation.
- Continually monitoring identification and implementation data through a racial equity lens.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- The portfolio numbers recommend schools look at these students? Response: Yes, the 224 should have a second look through the portfolio process. 224 is the minimum number.
- What about big kids, the upper elementary, middle and high school. How are other kids picked up? Response: CogAT is specific to Kindergarten and Grade 2. There are no measures for middle and high school. Gifted identification has historically been done in the primary grades.
- Since SPPS is now using the talent development model are you looking for ways to develop talent for all students. Response: The AVID programs look at the academic middle so as "capable" students are found AVID and personalized learning plans are being used to address those abilities. There is also the mindfulness of teachers to see ability in students and then provide ways to address those. Interest inventories and Naviance tools are also available to learn more about student interests and how they will add value and give support to rigorous course offerings for kids.
- Testing appears to still be identifying Caucasians at a high rate and other measures are being used to identify others (students of color). I would like to hear more about that as greater research is done. Response: CogAT identifies the top 10% of the district norm in three areas: qualitative verbal and nonverbal. The top 10% at building level use the composite scores. More students of color are identified at the building .
- As SPPS moves to a talent development model it has acceleration specialists and G/T teachers in some buildings but not others? How can SPPS talk about a talent development model and deal with disparate resources building to building? How will SPPS make talent development equitable building to building. Response: We are in the process of doing that, each building has options on how to deliver its talent development model.
- A Board member stated she appreciated hearing identification of students of color has moved from 8.4 to 15.5 using an equity lens,
- Future considerations, next steps -- will there be something in place for students with special needs? Response: TDAS is committed to meeting needs for student twice exceptional
- Is what each school offers for talent development shown on all school websites? Response: It is reflected in the School Choice Booklet and will be added to websites as they are revised.
- Concern was expressed about what is happening in the buildings and how each is working toward the talent development model. Response: SPPS will have TDAS in every school, it is imbedded in the personalized learning model.

G. Standing Item: PLTT Update - No Presentation

H. Standing Item: SSSC 2.0 Update - No Presentation

I. Work Session

**1. Board Check-In**

The Board decided it would assign a purpose statement to each item on COB agendas; then at the end of each meeting assess if the purpose was met. This will help in governance by defining equity challenges in various areas and how they are being met.

**2. District Communications Overview**

The Communications Department is building a communications plan that will address five focus areas:

- Areas and comments coming out of the Superintendent evaluation
- Grassroots efforts - moving toward a more individualized connection with community members.
- Negotiations
- Perception
- Long-term communication plan aligning with enrollment information and FMP process

**3. 2015 Board Budget**

The Board reviewed their budget with the CFO. Adjustments will be discussed at the February COB.

Discussion was held on holding a primary in 2015. The consensus was to continue, as in the past several years, without a primary in 2015.

**4. Board Committee Assignments to Outside Organizations**

- AMSD - Chue Vue
- Children's Collaborative - Jean O'Connell
- Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) - Mary Doran, Anne Carroll (Alt.)
- Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) - Keith Hardy, Louise Seeba (Alt)
- Inter-District Joint Powers Board (EMID) - Anne Carroll
- Joint Property Tax Advisory Committee (JPTAC) - John Brodrick, Louise Seeba, Chue Vue, Jean O'Connell (Alt.)
- Joint Property Tax Advisory Committee (3 County) - Committee Suspended
- Metro Educational Cooperative Service Unit (Metro ECSU) - Mary Doran
- Minnesota Education Equity Program (MEEP formerly MMEP) - Anne Carroll
- Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) - Minneapolis Representing
- Minnesota State High School League - John Brodrick, Mary Doran (Alt.)
- Ramsey County League of Local Governments - Keith Hardy
- St. Paul Teachers Retirement Assn. Board of Trustees - Jean O'Connell

**5. Listening Session - Renaming & Next Steps**

This was moved to the February COB meeting.

**6. Finalize Plans for Winter Retreat**

Board Secretary is to contact consultant to see if March 7 would work on their calendar.

**7. Gender inclusion**

Board members were instructed to forward any communication regarding the Gender Inclusion policy to Ryan Vernosh

### III. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION:** \_\_\_\_\_ moved the meeting adjourn. \_\_\_\_\_ seconded the motion. JO/JB

#### **Motion Passed**

The meeting adjourned at 9:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marilyn Polsfuss  
Assistant Clerk