

**MEETING MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING
March 4, 2014**

PRESENT: Board of Education: Keith Hardy, Mary Doran, John Brodrick, Anne Carroll, Jean O'Connell, Chue Vue, Louise Seeba (arrived at 4:42 p.m.)

Staff: Michelle Walker, Liz Keenan, Jacqueline Allen, Laurin Cathy, Doug Revsbeck, Lisa Sayles Adams, Ryan Vernosh, Andrew Collins, Sharon Freeman, Julie Schultz-Brown, Efe Agbamu, Marsha Baisch, Matt Mohs, Theresa Battle, Marie Schrul, Darlene Fry, Michelle Bierman, Kate Wilcox-Harris, Kathy Brown, Martin Hoerth

Other: Tony Lonetree

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. AGENDA

A. Presentation of SSSC 2.0

The original SSSC goals continue under SSSC 2.0:

- Goal 1: Achievement for all students
- Goal 2: Alignment of school programs
- Goal 3: Sustainability to optimize classroom resources and academics

The five SSSC 2.0 focus areas are:

- **Racial equity transformation** – this will involve changes to practices and systems, lead to valuing and investing in all students and examination of personal racial beliefs. In 2014-15, SPPS will deliver culturally responsive professional development (PD) to teachers at approximately 19 schools and to other staff. SPPS will develop plans for adoption of racially equitable curriculum and develop training for parents.
- **Personalized learning** – will establish personalized learning as a way SPPS educates all students. It will provide more technology tools to schools and students and will support and develop teachers. In 2014-15, implementation will involve a selection of 9th grade core subjects being up on the SPPS platform by January 2015. It will develop a process for curriculum vetting and purchase through OTLL, OPL and the IT Governance Council.
- **Ready for college and career** – students will be encouraged to start planning during their middle grade for high school and beyond. Post-secondary credit accrual opportunities will be increased and Career & Technology (CTE) will be expanded. In 2014-15 SPPS will incorporate Naviance and college-prep activities during Foundations (advisory) in middle school and will implement a 9th grade transition program.
- **Excellent PK-12 programs with connected pathways** – this will expand cultural, language and specialized programs. It will ensure programs have clear pathways from elementary through high school and provide opportunities to enroll in challenging classes for all students. In 2014-15, SPPS will launch 8th grade at Parkway Montessori and Creative Arts. It will develop elective African-American course offerings at middle and high schools and begin development of secondary articulation for Mandarin immersion.
- **Systems that support a premier education.**—this area aims at attracting and retaining students and families, building an exceptional workforce, equipping buildings for students' learning needs and establishing efficient and effective financial and operational practices.

In 2014-15, SPPS will monitor enrollment patterns to ensure continuity between programming, projections and resources. It will provide more PD for non-instructional staff.

Next steps are to hold general and topic-specific information sessions with students, families and the community and continue meetings with district partners and community organizations. It will develop a plan for SSSC 2.0 monitoring and reporting (VisionsCards) and work with district teachers, administration and other staff on implementation.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved, seconded by Ms. Doran, that the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education adopt the Strong Schools, Strong Communities (SSSC) 2.0 Strategic Plan and approve the three goals and five focus areas that are components of the plan.

Motion passed.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- What is meant by training the parents? Response: It is to make parents familiar with the district's racial equity work. Pacific Education Group has many very distinct training modules one of which is for parents. SPPS is considering taking some of those concepts and tailoring them to meet the district needs for parent training. This could involve a combination of different programs that meet the needs of the community members.
- These learning opportunities for parents, that really means families (not just parents) and would not be limited to Parent Academy, correct? Response: Yes, it would go beyond Parent Academy and would involve families. SPPS will also continue to expand its work with students on racial equity.
- The 2-page summary sheet, the wording "opportunity gap" (rather than achievement gap) is used. If that is the preferred phrasing then now is a good time to introduce that language.
- Under the Sustainability bullets, the wording "Attract and retain students and families" might better be phrased "by improving customer service". Retaining an exceptional workforce might also be added, as that is vital to the work.
- In the focus areas, what implementation efforts are focusing on kids who are still falling behind? Are there strategies for this? Response: That is the struggle, to make the work as all encompassing as possible. The work is about creating equity and specific work is being done across the board to shore up students. Racial equity is more about a system of supports and all other areas involve implementation of teaching and learning.
- In the area of closing the achievement gap and tactics that will lead to that end, the materials do not seem intentional enough in addressing that.
- In the 2-page write-up on changing practices and systems, distribution of school funds equitably, there needs to be a more in depth conversation on how it is going to be achieved. How will the budget address this? There are good best practices being used in some schools, how will those move on to other schools? What about distribution of staff and application of funding for schools?
- It was noted the write up is more focused on means rather than ends. Focus on processes and procedures as means to achieve ends. The ends connection needs to be made stronger.
- The middle school start of planning for high school and beyond, does that start at 6th or 8th grade? Response: It starts at 6th Grade (and actually in some cases earlier) and builds on through that experience.
- With regard to changing practices and systems, barriers need to be identified and specific practices and systems addressed to eliminate those barriers. Until parents hear specifics on these it may lead to some frustration.
- A premier education for all is what the Board wants, closing the gap is also vital, is SSSC 2.0 specific enough to close the achievement gap? It is important to have the 2-page summary document that distills what will happen but that document can be strengthened further.

- Intentionality needs to come in the implementation and in the communication of what and why things are being done. Staff needs to make the 2-pager clearer and explain where various actions connect to the strategic plan.
- Will there be more specific information available on the website? Response: The summary document is all that is on the web currently. That can be made stronger and expansions can be added to provide more detail.
- The proposed African American studies, administration needs to ensure it is available across the district not just in one school.
- How far ahead of the curve will SPPS be as it implements the strategic plan? Response: SPPS is setting trends in certain areas: Pre K, racial equity, college and career readiness, the choice system. The SSSC plan is unique compared to other districts. Intentionality of implementation will make the difference, delivery is essential.
- It was noted the VisionCard system is also far ahead of most districts.

B. Special Education Update: Secondary Schools

The update began with a review of various definitions for ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), DC (Developmental Cognitive Disability) and EBD (Emotional Behavioral Disorder). A chart was presented showing Special Education Students by Gender and Race from 2008 through 2013. In all cases, American Indian males had the highest percentages followed closely by African American males. Work rooted in racial equity is being done within the district to address racially disparate inequities. A focus has been placed on transforming a culture from specialized staff/programming for some of the student population to moving students into core classroom experiences in schools closest to their homes.

The amount of time that a special education student spends with his or her non-disabled peers is laid out under Federal definition. Level I (80-100%), Level II (40-60%) and Level III (0-40%). Historically, SPPS students have been identified as level III at a higher rate than other comparable school districts.

In the areas of ASD and EBD Programs representations are:

	EBD Black	EBD White	ASD Black	ASD White
• All Levels	66%	19%	15%	66%
• Level III	75%	11%	30%	33%

SPPS Special Education reading proficiency compared to Special Education students statewide (2008-2012) shows an average difference of 28% to 41% proficiency, respectively. 2013 to date is 22% SPPS to 33% statewide. Math proficiency shows similar discrepancies (2009-2013): 33% statewide, 21% SPPS.

District-wide, there are 274 Level III EBD students in 20 schools (7 high schools with 80 students, 7 middle schools with 68 students and 7 elementary schools with 126 students). District-wide there are 179 Level III ASD students in 22 schools (6 high schools with 65 students, 7 middle schools with 48 students and 9 elementary students with 66 students). Charts were provided showing where Level III EBD students were located in middle and high schools, by school and grade. Similar charts were provided for ASD students.

In the past SPPS Special Education Level III EBD and ASD programs were an isolated environment where students spent all of their school days. In 2013 and beyond when Level III EBD and ASD students need out-of-classroom support, they go to "resource rooms." 90% of all of the students are in at least one general education classroom per day.

In the past, 100% of SPPS Level III EBD and ASD students were in isolated environments 100% of the day. Currently and in future, 20% of students are in resource rooms 5% of the day; 60% are in resource rooms 40% of the day and 20% are in resource rooms 90-95% of the day. Co-teaching is provided for EBD and ASD students who have mainstream classes which break out as 10% are in special education environments only, 10% have one mainstream class, 60% have two mainstream classes and 20% have three or more mainstream classes. Instead of being in an isolated part of the school, in most instances

general education and special education teachers co-teach in classrooms (2011-12 had 15 classrooms, 2013-14 has 125 classrooms).

There has been a change in academic focus with an increased offering of AVID going from 2 students and no teachers in 2011-12 to a projection of 16 teachers with 165 students in 2014-15. More students are taking Read 180 classes and are also taking more rigorous English Language Arts (15% in 12-13 to 85% in 13-14).

Complete data for suspensions and referrals will be available in April; in the meantime, SPPS is supporting students and teachers through co-teaching, use of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) and non-violent crisis prevention.

Two principals joined the meeting to discuss what they are doing in their buildings to make a difference with the least restrictive models, behavior interventions, modifications and materials for use in addressing individual student issues.

Next steps include ongoing refinement in working with principals and teachers monthly and continuation of work with all schools to become better at working with ALL students.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- The change of practices in buildings, specifically the binder with information about the kids, when will that be standard in all buildings? Response: SPPS is looking at practices and how to best prepare gen ed and special ed teachers to meet the needs of all the kids in their classes. This is a collaborative model and it is building best practices that can be moved across all schools. The best method for moving these is still being explored.
- Incidents in schools seem to be put upon special ed students when disruption occurs. Are there statistics on disruptions (special ed vs. regular students)? Facts would be valuable in clarifying some of the misinformation to families. Response: There are several things bearing on some of the disruptions including the new grade transitions in middle and high school. This update provides Board members with facts as to the numbers of special ed students within the various schools and, as you can see, it is a small number at each site. Incident facts are best dispelled at the school level. Best practices are shared among principals and assistant principals for the schools and are disseminated through them to their staff. It was noted that if a special ed child cannot manage being in a general ed situation they are not exposed to it.
- It was noted it would be nice to know proportionality (i.e., one incident out of a 100 involved special ed, etc.)

A motion was made and passed extending discussion an additional 10 minutes.

- Is there a need for more services at Level I and II? Response: That is part of the adaptability in integrating Level III into the general ed population; staff have to keep shifting to provide supports in the schools for Level I and II. Every school is different and needs to plan better for all of this, scheduling, staffing, etc. Schools look at pre-empting incidents or tweaking practices to address needs.
- There is concern out there throughout the district; acceptable behavior should be expected in all schools irrespective of classifications.
- It was noted that SPPS has an obligation to special ed students, as it has to all other students, to provide them with the best possible education. The conversation needs to be moved back to ensuring each students get the best SPPS has to offer while recognizing when things are not going well and addressing those issues by putting supports in place. The focus needs to be on serving kids' needs in a respectful environment for both kids and adults. In addition, making sure resources are where they are needed to provide the best education for all students.
- It was noted real time data is crucial in meeting the needs of students.

C. FY 15 General Fund Budget Rollout Plan

The Controller reviewed the key planning assumptions:

1. SSSC 2.0 Plan is the first consideration in funding.
2. The budget is built on current law.
3. The Referendum Fund shows an additional \$9.0 million for Personalized Learning Through Technology
4. The blended site-based and centralized funding method will be used again in FY 15 for schools
5. A table detailing the average salary and benefits will be provided for budget prep.
6. The budget should maintain an unassigned fund balance of at least five percent of the general fund expenditures in accordance with Board policy.
7. Non-school programs will be reported into three categories: Central Administration, District-wide Support and School Service Support.
8. Fully financed budgets with anticipated revenues and expenditures of over \$500,000 for the 2014-15 school year will be included in the adopted budget.
9. The budget for 2014-15 must be approved by the Board by 6/30/2014.

She then went on to provide the “big picture” overview of the General Fund.

	<u>FY14 Adopted</u>	<u>FY 15 Prelim.</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Revenue	\$505.6	\$526.0	\$20.4	4.03%
Fund Balance	12.7	5.1*	(7.6)	(59.8%)
Expenditures	<u>518.3</u>	<u>532.9</u>	14.6	2.82%
Balance	0	(1.8)		

*FY 14 (6/30/14) unassigned fund balance projected as of December 2013, 5.9% (\$5.1 million above 5% Board Policy.)

It was noted staffing/class size issues will raise expenditures so this needs to be addressed as the budget moves forward.

The proposed schedule for budget adoption begins in February with a presentation to district leadership followed by a macro budget picture for the Board in March. March and April will see Administration consulting with schools on FY 15 planning (enrollment, class size, space, etc.) prior to budget distribution. April 11 is proposed for distribution of school budgets followed by presentations to various groups from mid-April to mid-May. April 15 will see distribution of tools and worksheets to General Fund programs. School budgets must be returned by May 9 and General Fund budgets by May 16. June 18 is slated for Board approval of the budget.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Engagement with school sites, it appears expenditures assume schools will do all that they are currently doing plus SSSC 2.0 expectations. Response: Yes. Administration will be discussing the impact of class size language on sites where there are limitations in order to avoid possible major issues if exceptions have to be made to class size ranges. It is coordinating with sites and the Federation as see where projections are going.
- With the recent changes in bond rating processes, the Board needs to have discussion and guidance on its reserve fund policy.
- In terms of coordination between visionaries and the money people on the long-range plan, how will the vision and money be reconciled? Response: Administration is working on a five-year budget to project funding and expenditures. It is thinking long-range on the cost to do everything it wants to do and is building a budget model to support the school side along with providing money to do support services as well. Administration is being thoughtful about the five-year picture and having some sense of what resources are available and what might need to be scaled back. Finance is also always looking for opportunities to save and/or realign resources.

- The Board needs more background on the fund balance. Does it need to be increased above the 5% board policy? Response: The bond changes were basically a reassignment of rating criteria focusing more on solvency, coverage of long-term liabilities and fund balance. SPPS does need a higher fund balance.
- The expenditures figure does not include the class size staffing changes recently negotiated. Is that correct? Response: Correct, that is approximately \$10.8 million.
- Administration will be focusing in with schools on the staffing changes and how that will affect their budgets. There are categorical rules on how funds are invested within the schools so when schools get their allocations the budget formula has pretty much defined how the money is allocated.
- Are there opportunities on the fully financed side for grants, etc for revenue? Response: At this point, there is nothing major; SPPS will have to do better alignment. MDE is allowing some flexibility on title resources for another year which helps.
- Administration will consult with schools and communities, what does that mean? Response: The first part is the principal, assistant superintendents and Placement will consult on enrollment numbers. The contract designated “Committees” that will look at enrollment will, at some sites, have challenges. The principals will need to go back to their leadership team and their community to define what the potential is and what mitigation strategies might be. The second part is school forums engaging their communities in the school budget. Secondary principals have been asked to come to their initial budget meeting with their schedulers so everyone is involved at the beginning of the conversation.
- The importance of an aggressive consultative process was stressed so misinformation is reduced as an issue. The community needs to understand the process and the implications.
- The “committees on class size” are really about having a voice at the schools. It is an opportunity to communicate what the changes mean, how it is different from the past and what options are available.
- Are Intervention Specialists included in the budget figures as they stand now? Response: Yes.

D. Standing Item: Negotiations Update

The CEO provided a status update on EAs, Principals and School and Service Personnel negotiations. She noted the teachers are voting on ratification of their agreement on March 4..

The Board complemented the SPPS negotiation team on their professionalism.

E. Standing Item: Policy Update

Two procedures are being developed in compliance with the Minnesota Data Practices Act (MN Statutes, Chapter 13): **Access to Public Data** and **Access to Data for Data Subjects**. The work is being done in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel and should be completed and routed by the end of March.

Work is going forward on the “**Sex and Gender Inclusion Policy**” in order to ensure all students have access to programming, extra curriculars and facilities in which they feel comfortable and safe. It will address systemic and environmental inequities for trans youth. (i.e., Trans identified students show an increase in illness resulting from not using restrooms due to feeling unsafe or uncomfortable.) Intersection with the Bullying Policy and Racial Equity Policy are also being looked at.

Stakeholder engagement in this policy is largely collaborative. Identification of stakeholders includes: students, staff (teachers, counselors, nurses, athletic directors, etc.), supportive families, Out for Equity, Gay-Straight Alliance and Health Start Clinics, etc. Multiple venues will be made available for feedback and input. MSHSL will be kept informed of the process..

The **Intellectual Property Policy** is also moving forward. Higher ed policies are being looked at and CGCS is being consulted for model IP district policies. Stakeholder engagement will be largely consultative. Identified stakeholders include OTLL, staff

(teachers, admin), Personalized Learning staff, students and targeted staff (i.e., those who use 3D printers).

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Why are data practices being revisited? Response: SPPS is not in compliance. It does not have written procedures in place.
- Will the two policies be ready for the new school year? Response: The sex and gender will possibly be brought forward in May. Intellectual property is scheduled for its first reading in the fall.
- There is a glossary available for the sex and gender policy. Staff was asked to send this out to Board members.
- A request was made for an update on Out for Equity.

F. Work Session

1. Board Check-In

The Director of the Office of Racial Equity provided observations on Board interaction during the meeting and provided input on possible modifications that might be made.

2. Future Meetings

Discussion was held on what level of detail Board members want at Board and COB meetings along with clarification on the use of small group meetings. Information at monthly Board meetings is provided to enlighten the public. Information presented at the COB meetings is provided for additional discussion of issues, for guidance or for receiving a response. The idea of establishing other committees was raised.

3. Listening Sessions

The Board Secretary was instructed to find dates for three Listening Sessions to be held in March, April and May. Preferred locations were the Conway Community Recreation Center, the Rice Street Library and the West 7th Community Center.

4. District Council Assignments

Board members reviewed and reallocated their assignments to the various District Councils.

III. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. O'Connell moved the meeting adjourn. Motion seconded by Mr. Brodrick.
--

Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Polsfuss
Assistant Clerk