

**MEETING MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING
October 30, 2012**

PRESENT: Board of Education: Elona Street-Stewart, Jean O'Connell, John Brodrick, Mary Doran, Louise Seeba, Anne Carroll, Keith Hardy (arrived 4:43 p.m.)

Staff: Superintendent Silva, Mary Gilbert, Christine Osorio, Marsha Baisch, Jacqueline Allen, Michelle Walker, Darlene Fry, Tim Caskey, Jackie Turner, Michael Baumann, Marie Schrul, Sharon Freeman, Steve Unowski, Julie Schultz-Brown, Efe Agbamu, Matt Mohs, Jaber Alsiddiqui, Joe Munnich, Andrew Collins, Michelle Bierman, Craig Anderson, Liz Keenan

Other: Mary Cathryn Ricker, Sue Snyder, Tony Lonetree, Zong Pha

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m.

II. AGENDA

A. 2012 Legislative Update & Agenda

The SPPS Legislative Liaison indicated the 2013 session would convene on January 6, 2013 with the largest turnover of legislators since 2002. 47 legislators either retired or were running for other offices, which put one-quarter of the legislature up for election. While there was some good news on the revenue side, the State may still face a \$1.1 billion shortfall (based on the February forecast). By law, any surplus in the November forecast must be used to pay back the schools which are owed \$2.4 billion.

She went on to say the Minnesota Education Finance Working Group has made several recommendations regarding revamping the school formula with the goals of:

- Improving adequacy, equity and stability of PK-12 education funding
- Simplifying education funding
- Preserving local control
- Closing the achievement gap
- Promoting high achievement for all students and
- Directing resources closest to students, teachers and the classroom.

Hearings are being held around the state for input and final decisions will be made after the election.

She then went on to review the 2013 SPPS Legislative Agenda in detail. (See Attachment A.)

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Clarify what this teacher test is – academic, classroom management? Response: It is a standard academic test.
- So these candidates are passing in another state but are not able to pass this test in Minnesota, why? Response: This particular test may not be available in their state. This test is mandated in Minnesota for licensure. Previously teachers were allowed time to take the test and if they did not pass they could be provisional until they did pass and

had up to three years to accomplish this. Now, however, teachers coming into the state have to pass the test as a condition of licensure in Minnesota and there are no provisional conditions stipulated. At the end of session this past year, there were lots of teachers from foreign countries in immersion programs who would not be able to continue teaching so the state did give teachers who are currently licensed and teaching in Minnesota one more year to complete the test.

- Is there a problem if so few pass it? Response: The Board of Teaching is looking at it in the hopes of identifying issues.
- Concerning the referendum and levies in general, I would prefer to look at the whole concept of referendums and why, in Minnesota, the only group of governing officials who needs to go to the public for levy authorization are school districts. We need to be proactive on a broader scale and say this Board should be authorized each year to levy for the amount necessary to do the programs required to educate its students. I would rather go broader and then support the pieces if we cannot get the broader. Additional comments: There is no issue here, let's push for both and see which flies. Let's not put all the eggs in that one basket. Historically both AMSD and MSBA have asked for this. School districts should have the same authority as cities and counties to levy; they have the authority to make decisions on priorities important to their areas and levy for them. You can work down from the broader view on this. Response: This provision can easily be amended to say that School Boards should have the same authority to levy as cities and counties do.
- It was noted, the Board needs to consider how special education falls into this as far as funding goes. In a system that is already not very equal, let's try to avoid building in additional inequities. Response: The goals state "The State should phase in a redesigned funding formula that provides districts with stable funding, including for state and federal mandates; recognizes the diverse needs of students; and provides adequate resources to ensure college and career readiness for all students." Keep in mind also that the only constitutional obligation the state has is to maintain schools and roads. So if we recommit to the constitutional obligation, that is pretty much where we are. There are a few groups looking at this obligation.
- There is also the fundamental question about division of power among divisions of government. The constitution does make the obligation of the state very clear on education.
- How should this requirement be phrased? Response. I would ask for help on this from our legislative liaison and take it to the MSBA Delegation.
- Concern was expressed the State might mandate all funding. Additional comments: By focusing on the rights of a political entity there might be a distraction from the obligation of the state. We need to avoid allowing them to avoid funding at the state level. There are a huge number of districts that would self-destruct under an abusive legislative response. Former Governor Ventura addressed this issue straight on.
- There is a constitutional obligation for the State to provide adequate education, not every community has an equally available property tax base so that alone creates inequities, District school boards are being held to a different standard than other city councils and county boards. This needs to be looked at as a package including funding formulas and other priorities.
- The common core standards, growth measures and assessments. How can we prevent the false assumption that an increasingly broad national support for growth measures is not about celebrating low success rates. And, it is not also about punishing schools/districts that start with a high achievement level and therefore grow at small rates. How can this be avoided? Response: There is on-going discussion about weight of growth versus status (attainment of proficiency as measured by whatever assessment is in place). Common Core and state standards are pushing for more standardization around reading and math. We do not want to create an incentive where the accountability system rewards incremental growth. A status only measure may be a distorted picture of a school so you need to balance between the two. Over time, there will be opportunity to look at various models states have put in place. There will be a three-year window of experimentation across 35 states that will have different models in place and this will allow all entities to pull lessons from them.

- A request was made to have a separate agenda item for IDEA in order to establish the importance of getting full funding for IDEA up to the federal commitment of 40%.
- The ability to provide quality education to families in transition (homeless) -- can we assume that all siblings are recognized as in that same status? Who determines this? Is it seen as a family unit? Response: Broadly, yes. When an intake is done with a family the full range of children in that family is looked at to look at the full spectrum of ways to connect them with services. In some instances, it is not always clear. Each intake is done at the individual level to bring resources to bear to support the family or individual. It would be better if the process was cleaner and there were more resources out there, particularly in Ramsey County. Discussions are underway with County to try to get kids into foster care or families into housing so the kids stay closer to their schools.
- Does the District need to initiate a request on this or does it come from elsewhere? Situations are handled individual by individual, family by family. There is a mix of many different pathways.
- Integration -- what is going to happen? Response: We can make a better prediction after the election.
- The question was asked that once this agenda is officially passed could it be brought to MSBA and AMSD in a timely manner. Response: This is already in progress.

MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education accept the 2012 Legislative Update and approve the 2012 Legislative Agenda with the adjustments as discussed. Ms. O'Connell seconded the motion.

Motion passed.

B. Budget Guidelines for FY 13

The Proposed Budget will reflect the District's 2014 Strong Schools, Strong Communities (SSSC) as adopted by the Board of Education. There will be no deviation from practices implemented with SSSC; it will remain consistent with practices. It was noted the application of inflation factors is not a pre-emption of the collective bargaining process.

Calculations for preparing the budget will include:

- Revenue Projection. Revenue will be calculated using current law.
- Inflation. The Budget Office and the Office of Human Resources will project salary and fringe benefits using actual salary and benefit amounts if labor contracts have been negotiated and all non-personnel budget items will reflect no more than two percent (2%) inflation except for items related to contractual commitments.
- Average Salary and Enrollment. The Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (REA) and the Budget Office will prepare overall enrollment projections.
- Benefits Calculation Data. A table detailing the average salary and benefits will be provided for budget preparations.
- Fund Balance. The budget should maintain an unassigned fund balance of five percent (5%) of the general fund expenditures in accordance with the BOE policy.

School budgets will be:

- A continuation of the refined blended Site-Based and Centralized funding method for FY14.
- Class size range will determine teacher FTEs.
- Office staffing (Principal, AP, and Clerk) and other staffing will be determined by enrollment and type of school.
- Intervention staff will be determined by enrollment and differentiation.

Non-School Programs will be reported in three categories: Central Administration, District-wide Support, and School Service Support.

The FY14 Budget format will include summary information for schools and programs in the preliminary budget document. Each summary page will include an analysis of the changes to the current year budget that are affecting the schools and programs.

Fully Financed budgets with anticipated revenues and expenditures over \$500,000 for the 2013-2014 school year will be included in the Adopted budget.

Other Resources Allocated to Schools will be included with school by school detail of resources allocated to them such as grants, special education, operations, and student activities, to name a few.

Administration will present a balanced budget to the Board. The budget for 2013-2014 must be approved by the Board of Education by June 30, 2013. The Adopted budget will be published on the Budget Office website.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- In the past principals understood how much money comes from the referendum, since SPPS now centrally allocates a portion of the budget, when parents ask how much would be lost in referendum dollars and how would that affect a school, principals do not seem to have or be aware of that information. Response: It is listed for each school, as a separate column, in the Budget Book. Administration was asked to be sure that they somehow identify how much money going into schools shows in the general fund and how much referendum money is there.
- Grants and fund raising, there are still extreme differences (disparities) in school fund raising capacity and results. Is there a role for the district in doing capacity building so other schools can gain proficiency? Response: This is being approached in a variety of ways. There is a Bigelow grant across all schools for use in classrooms. Give Minnesota is working with web pages for each school for fund raising. SPPS is working with The Saint Paul Foundation to beef up individual fund raising with donors for specific needs (i.e., calculators). More training is being provided for teaches and PTOs in grant writing by the district.

MOTION: Mr. Brodrick moved the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education approve the Budget Guidelines for the 2013-14 budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Doran.

Motion passed.

C. Proposed 2012-13 School Calendar

The co-chairs of the Calendar Committee provided the names of the individuals making up the committee and the timeline for the work.

In order to build the calendars, information was gathered on or from:

- Contract obligations
- Religious holidays
- Calendar examples from all 50 states
- Calendars from school districts that are closing the achievement gap
- Comparisons of instructional days with other districts'
- State and national testing calendars
- The family survey
- The staff survey and
- Input from stakeholder groups (SPFT, OCCOR, SPI, REA, Office of Early Learning, Division of Schools, Office of Family Engagement, ALC, HR, Payroll, Special Ed, ELL, and the Middle School Transition Team)

Over 700 family surveys were collected. The majority of respondents preferred conferences in November, rather than September and the "traditional calendar" rather than the year-round.

Staff survey results came in from 200 staff members. The majority of the respondents preferred conferences in November rather than September and the traditional calendar rather than an extended calendar into the summer. Staff indicated they appreciated the Professional Development Days and Grading Days but did request these be attached to natural breaks and end of terms.

Considerations used in developing the calendar included: the State Fair/starting after Labor Day, testing schedules including AP/IB, the printing window for elementary progress reports, contractual language, summer school start time and holiday breaks.

Of five districts surveyed, only Minneapolis had more instructional days (176) than St. Paul (175). Staff then presented a chart showing various dates for Pre-K, Kindergarten, Elementary and Secondary in the areas of no school for students, parent/teacher conferences, conference prep/grading days, professional development days, total instructional days for students and workdays for teachers.

Three proposed calendars were brought to the Board for approval: the 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16. All were based on semesters and quarters. Three year-round calendars were also brought forward for the same years.

Other recommendations brought forward from the process were:

- A request for a commitment to avoid evening meetings on significant religious/cultural holidays
- Future consideration of increasing the number of instructional days for students
- Embedding conversations about future Grading and Professional Development Days into regular PIC meetings
- Consideration of a permanent window for Spring Break to eliminate big shifts from one year to the next (i.e., after 3rd Quarter).

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- The calendar research in other districts, how does SPPS fit with some of the high performing districts in terms of instructional hours? Response: Typically, they have more days (between 5 to 10 additional days); the committee did not look at hours. This seems to be a trend in high performing districts.
- What about Charlotte Mecklenburg? Response: They have more days but fewer actual instructional hours than SPPS.
- Having conferences in November vs. September – are there any studies on recommending one over the other? Response: It was found a lot of places do both. There is no research supporting one or the other. The rationale for two is of setting goals at the early meetings and reviewing student performance later in the year. No preference for one or the other was seen.
- Has SPPS looked at surrounding districts or high performing districts and when they have conferences? Response: They all look pretty much the same being at mid-fall (October).
- For the November conferences, is another reason for holding them then due to lot of testing being done at the beginning of year? Response: Yes, conferences then become a place to share data back with families while still allowing staff to review the data before conferences.
- It was noted, with the MCA Math test there is the option to test three times per year. This year SPPS will test in winter for MCAs and again at the end of the school year. SPPS will still utilize the MAP test also as that provides data to improve instruction. It is hoped the MCA will eventually provide the same information as the MAP but right now, it is about the quality of information gotten from the various tests.
- With the three testing period options, does that mean the state is committing to quicker turnaround on data? Response: The new vendor indicated schools would have the opportunity to access data within 24 hours.

- If SPPS does MCAs twice in math and students meets expectations in winter but not in spring, can a choice be made to use the best of the results? Response: No, data can only be used now from the results of the year-end test.
- How does common core tie to administering MCAs and MAP tests? Response: The MAP has been revised to align to common core and all assessments will be much more rigorous. The difference between MAP and MCA is the adaptive nature of the assessment. MAP has a much broader range. MCA is more limited because of Federal constraints but will be adaptive within grade range.
- Why would SPPS give up the formative nature of MAP? Response: It comes down to instructional days and test fatigue if students are given too many tests. It is also, about where SPPS can get the most valuable data with a formative nature. Additionally, the year-end MAP gives information useful for summer school.
- A question was asked about increasing instructional time. Response: More instructional time is always good but every time a day is added it costs a significant amount of money and comes down to does the district have the dollars to do it. There needs to be sustainable funding before adding days is a real option.
- Conferences, why are conferences scheduled on days before holidays or spring break? What determines exact days of conferences when connected to days off? Response: A primary consideration is when fresh data will be available to share with families. Another consideration is avoiding inequities and inconsistencies, getting people into the schools, and participating.
- Are Middle and High Schools on the same schedules? Response: No. When will they get there? Response: in 2013-14, administration is working with principals to get a consistent schedule across all secondary schools. It is hoped there will be an aligned PreK – 12 schedule not too long after that.
- The fixed date for spring break, attaching it to the end of third quarter? Response: In the current calendars, this has the net effect of having a fixed date. It is no longer being aligned with Easter. This decision was anchored to grading days.
- Why were clerks not included on committees as they deal most with parents? Response: There were a couple members on the committee who work closely with families and clerks.
- Appreciation was expressed for gaining input from various groups on specific issues rather than all issues; this was an efficient use of time as well as providing outreach to pretty much all key stakeholders.

MOTION: Ms Carroll moved the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education approved the report and all three calendars presented (2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16) along with the year-round calendars for the same period with the proviso that the later two may change if future circumstances warrant it. The Board will continue to review the calendars on an annual basis. The motion was seconded by Ms. O'Connell.

Motion passed six in favor and one abstention (Hardy)

D. SSSC Monitoring: Staff Use of Student Data & Work to Improve Instruction

The Superintendent stated this begins the second annual cycle of reporting on VisionCards. The information for this one focuses on how adults are utilizing the student data to improve instruction.

Administration indicated all figures were for SY 2011-12. In the area of **Common Assessments:**

- District Common Assessments created and aligned to standards (% of units of study) for
 - o Math 7-12 is at Baseline (68%) in its first year of measurement
 - o Literacy 7-12 is at Progress (77%) in its first year of measurement
 - o Math K-6 is at Baseline (56%) in its first year of measurement
- Mondo Bookshop Assessments administered (% of classrooms) – Literacy is at 100% (Vision); up from 91% in the previous year.

Use of data or PLC with the Data Teams Process functioning close to or at proficiency (% of PLCs at target schools) is at Progress (77%); up from 52% the previous year.

In the area of **Utilization and Delivery of Curriculum**, two areas are measured:

- Differentiated Small Group Instruction aligned to student stage of reading development (% of classrooms) – Literacy K-6 is at 62% (Baseline); up from 50% in 10-11.
- Math Key Ideas, Concepts and Vocabulary articulated and used by teachers and students (% of classrooms) – Math 7-12 is at Progress (72%); up from 49% in 10-11.

Student Engagement shows information from 1,909 Senior Surveys (% who agree or strongly agree that *"my teachers stimulated my thinking and my interest in learning"* is at Progress (88%) up from 82% in 2004-05.

Feedback is measured in two areas:

- Math Feedback provided to students (% of classrooms implementing error analysis) – Math 7-12 is at Progress (83%), up from 55% in 10-11.
- Senior Survey (1,921 surveys) - % who agree or strongly agree that *"I received adequate personal attention from my teacher"* is at Progress (83%) up from 78% in 2004-05.

Information on the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) at Hancock-Hamline University Collaborative Magnet School was provided by its principal.

Results from **school staff feedback indicators** was also reported in five areas:

- Use of Data -- Teachers in this school share and discuss student work with other teachers (4,317 responses): 29% strongly agree, 59% agree and 12% disagree or strongly disagree.
- Utilization & Delivery of Curriculum -- There is consistency in curriculum instruction and learning materials among teachers in the same grade level at this school (3,925 responses): 19% strongly agree, 67% agree and 15% disagree or strongly disagree.
- Curriculum, instruction and learning materials are well coordinated across the different grade levels at this school (3,925 respondents): 9% strong agree, 63% agree and 28% disagree or strongly disagree.
- Common Assessments -- How frequently do you review assessment data with teachers in your grade level (4,129 responses): 24% said weekly, 36% every 3-4 weeks, 11% every 6-8 weeks, 17% a few times a year and 11% never.
- How frequently do you review assessment data with teachers across grades? (4,179 responses) 11% weekly, 16% every 3-4 weeks, 12% every 6-8 weeks, 34% a few times a year and 29% never.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- PLC implementation at target schools, how many were there? Response: 18 schools are targeted schools. Next year all schools will be included
- The data where individuals strongly disagreed, are those places where it is not happening in the schools or is it a set of particular types or a set not being included? What is the meaning of the data on those who are not satisfied? Response: This, in many cases, is because the effort is now being launched across all schools and indicates areas where PLCs are not fully implemented or supported to the extent desired and in some areas where data is not being reviewed to the extent desired. Taken across bargaining units, TAs do not participate in PLCs but were asked the same questions that may have skewed the results to some extent. The expectation was to do training first and then do implementation. The Board indicated they wanted administration to be sure they know who disagreed and to target help to those who need it.
- Teachers who are doing the PLCs, how does this change the nature and intensity of the task during a teacher's day/week? Response: Accommodating this was the rationale of giving 50 minutes of PLC times a week for teachers so they could have the conversations while students get science instruction.
- While teachers are doing the everyday tasks grade school teachers do, when do they collect, analyze data, and deliver curriculum and the assessments. Response: Every

teacher has 50 minutes to prep for class along with another 50 minutes for the PLC work within the school week. This allows for greater collaboration in developing strategies for helping students in their learning.

- Are teachers being pulled out too much? Could some do only one PLC per week? Response: Best practice shows less than once per week is not effective, 50 minutes twice per week is allowed this year and will be reassessed to see what works best. This was done to get as many teachers informed about the process as possible.
- This survey – were questions answered anonymously? Response: The questions were asked and answered through a link with the University of Chicago under the Five Essentials Program provided to SPPS through a McKnight Grant. Results were disaggregated by schools and in other ways; individuals were anonymous.
- Science teachers – how are they worked into the PLC? Response: PLCs only cover classroom teachers at this time. SPPS is working on finding ways to embed everyone; this is another fiscal issue.
- What do you project (Hancock-Hamline) the return on investment is in moving results up for students of color? Response: That is hard to measure, but if we are to move students forward this is the best shot at getting them to proficiency in the best way possible.
- What is the plan for conversations in PLCS for how instructional staff will move students of color to higher level? Response: The Assistant Superintendents are in the schools constantly to see what is going on in PLCs. Principals must lead the work and do check ins in their school. It is all about accountability. Equity conversations are occurring across the district. This is improving the work of looking at data and looking at race within the data and through an equity lens.
- A measurement on how moving students of color forward would be nice to see.
- Special Ed focus on suspension data, how is SPPS using the equity lens around Special Education and suspensions? Response: Equity walk throughs are being done with principals. Data shows suspensions are down 60% so far this year for African American students in Special Ed. The PBIS efforts and equity work is creating change in student behavior.

MOTION: Ms. O'Connell moved the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education accept the SSSC Monitoring Report on Staff Use of Student Data & Work to Improve Instruction. Ms Doran seconded the motion

Motion passed.

E. Standing Item: Policy Update
No update was provided.

F. Standing Item: Referendum Update
No update was provided.

G. Work Session

1. District Communication Plan on Referendum

An administrative team is working on a plan, which will be provided to the Board.

2. Board Check-In

- Director Street-Stewart reported on her participation on a new task force called "Everybody In" between Ramsey County and Hennepin County. It focus is on workforce and equity discrepancies in employment.
- Director Carroll indicated she would be serving on the SPROCKETS data team. She also indicated she would provide a report on the CGCS to the Board in November.
- Director Seeba reported on Metro ECSU's leasing program.
- Director Hardy will provide a CUBE report in November as well.

III. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Brodrick moved the meeting adjourn. Mr. Hardy seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Polsfuss
Assistant Clerk/Secretary to the Board

ATTACHMENT A
Committee of the Board Meeting, October 30, 2012

2013 Legislative Agenda
DRAFT Revised: October 26, 2012

The mission of the Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) has long been “A Premier Education for All.” The SPPS Board of Education designated three long-term “Ends” to support this mission:

- *High Achievement:* Learners will meet the highest district and state standards through a learning journey that is academically rich and rigorous.
- *Meaningful Connections:* Learners will understand the relationship between their lives and the lives of others and the relevance of their educational experiences to their roles in society.
- *Respectful Environment:* The learning environment will be safe, nurturing, and equitable for our diverse learners.

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The Ends give structure to SPPS priorities in state and federal policy.

HIGH ACHIEVEMENT

The State should phase in a redesigned funding formula that provides districts with stable funding, including for state and federal mandates; recognizes the diverse needs of students; and provides adequate resources to ensure college and career readiness for all students.

Recommit the State to its constitutional obligation to fund education, supporting the goals of the Minnesota Education Finance Working Group, with recommendations that:

- Increase pupil weight for all-day Kindergarten for students in poverty to 1.0 and allow districts that have all-day kindergarten to use funding for 3- and 4-year-old prekindergarten programming.
- Restore the inflation-adjusted general education formula to 2003 level.
- Roll in a portion of the referendum into a new location equity levy to recognize cost differences.
- Replace several levies with a uniform general levy that would include a portion of the referendum.
- Restore school levy equalization formulas.
- Allocate all compensatory revenue based on poverty concentration and allow greater flexibility in the use to close achievement gaps.
- Simplify student weights to allow districts the flexibility to provide individual instruction (now done with ALC/Extended day dollars) during the day.
- Significantly increase funding for special education, reduce the cross subsidy, and reform the formula to be based on students served, with additional focus on districts with excess cost. Require charter and nonresident districts to provide and pay for special education services they provide—unless there is a tuition agreement in place.
- Maximize federal revenue for health-related special education and mental health services.
- Reduce unnecessary special education staff paperwork that does not improve student outcomes.
- Allow immigrant students who are new to the state as secondary students and enroll by tenth grade to continue to work toward a diploma until age 23 in an Area Learning Center or Alternative Learning Program.
- Allow school boards to renew an existing referendum by a majority vote of the school board at the current level and term.
- Require the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to provide districts with on-line curriculum based on state standards at no cost to schools.
- Redraft the care and treatment language to make it clear that the district providing the services for both regular education and special education students is eligible to be paid for services provided.
- Support continued categorical and discrete bonding and installment purchase contract authorities, and extend local bonding authority.
- Modify the homeless transportation statute to promote family stability, by allowing a district to transport kindergarten students to the same school as their siblings.
- Provide additional career and technical revenue to districts that enter into an articulated agreement for students to be dual-enrolled in career or college courses.

- Permit a school district to provide transportation for pupils participating in an articulated program operated under an agreement between the school district and a postsecondary institution. (Current law allows only if does not increase costs).
- Maintain current fiscal disparities distribution.

INTEGRATION

The current integration revenue statute is repealed after this year. Current law has the base funding for the replacement program at \$41 million for 2014; \$68.5 million for 2015; and allowed districts to certify their levy at last year's amount. The finance task force recommendation includes a new formula based on the number of students of color—but also includes a broad transition formula that would include all the changes recommended by the task force. The rule was not repealed and the special session law further stated that segregation is prohibited. In the new program, support recommendations that:

- Ensure that the state keeps its commitment as outlined in the special session law, that the funding allocation for the new program should ensure funding stability for districts between the current integration program and the new program.
- Continue access for traditional public school students, including transportation, to high quality school choice/magnet programs and language academies.
- Promote collaboration with MDE for approval and implementation of plans that promote integration activities that also acknowledge the changing context of schools within communities.

NEW MANDATES

Allow local boards to “opt out” of any new state mandate that is not adequately funded or not tied to student achievement or student safety. The legislature often proposes new or expanded mandates without providing the necessary funding. The legislature should reexamine the existing state mandates and provide adequate revenue prior to imposing any new mandates for districts or students.

FEDERAL BUDGET / SEQUESTRATION

The SPPS Board of Education adopted a resolution on October 16, 2012, urging Congress and the President to: “mitigate the drastic cuts to education that would affect our students and communities, and to protect education as an investment critical to economic stability and American competitiveness.”

ESEA/NCLB REAUTHORIZATION

As Congress debates reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), most recently reauthorized as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, SPPS will advocate for a new law embodying the following core principles:

Establish authorization and appropriations levels for key formula programs (IDEA, Title I, Part A, Title II, and Title III) to sufficiently meet the goals of the law and to serve all eligible students.

- Embracing college and career readiness as the core purpose of Title I is an important shift, but the program's emphasis on academic support services for children of color and economically disadvantaged students must remain paramount.
- Ensure funding is not diverted for new competitive grant opportunities at the expense of formula programs.

Reduce, eliminate and avoid new set-aside requirements to give more flexibility to meet the needs of diverse learners in the context of state and local requirements and expectations.

- Eliminate requirements to divert significant federal resources from students to ineffective and unproven mandates such as the supplemental educational services and transportation for school choice, as allowed under the Secretary's waivers, should continue.
- Allow flexibility in use of parental involvement funds to engage parents and develop their capacity through district-wide efforts rather than spreading resources thinly across schools.

Reconfigure ESEA accountability mechanisms to focus on student growth; focus improvement efforts on the most underperforming schools in a state or district; and recognize improvement.

- Minimize federal mandates regarding state assessment systems. Mandated annual testing in Grades 3-8 and once in high school for reading and mathematics, along with the English Language proficiency tests, science assessments, and alternative assessments have taken significant instructional time away from schools. The law must strike a better balance between assessment primarily for accountability and other assessments used to influence instruction and programming.
- Allow states sufficient flexibility to develop new state accountability systems for schools making substantial progress in closing the racial achievement gap, such as those approved under the Secretary's waiver authority. Require states to revisit the systems every three years to ensure the systems are meeting the goals intended.
- Ensure sufficient flexibility in state assessment requirements to allow the most appropriate inclusion of all special education students. Include continued authorization for modified assessments (capped at 2%) currently allowed in federal regulations.
- The commitment to equitable distribution of the effective teachers is laudable, but must be flexible enough to recognize multiple approaches to defining effectiveness. In addition, districts must have options for addressing staffing requirements as part of the accountability provisions of the statute.

Retain current provisions regarding homeless children and youth with minor adjustments to better serve children and families

- Make provisions for districts to work with families and advocates to meet the best educational needs of the individual children and preventing families from having to send children to schools in multiple districts.
- Recognize district of origin for instances where families have an enrollment history with a district and an intention to remain in the district but became homeless during a period of transition across schools in the district.
- Allow for placement of students in a school other than school of origin if the family and homeless liaison agree placement in another school is better for a child.
- Reject proposals to use Title I, Part A funds for transportation. This will divert much needed resources from schools and harm the support services currently provided through the homeless set-aside.

ASSESSMENTS

The following principles should guide any proposal to modify or add new assessments:

- Develop using research-based assessment principles, designed to measure student growth and be of direct assistance in making instructional change.
- Administer after students have had the opportunity and resources to master the material. This may include extending the day and/year, AVID, appropriate funding for compensatory and ELL programs.
- Tie to "shared stakes" in which the system (state and districts) is accountable for results. Any exam may not be implemented as a "high stakes" test without the necessary educational supports for all students based on the individual students' needs.
- Must not lead to unintended consequences, such as increasing high school dropouts. In addition: Districts must be appropriately resourced in technology to support the next generation of assessments across all grade levels.

MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

- Support changes to state law that permit districts flexibility to hire and recruit teachers of color by providing more options for a licensed teacher from another state to obtain licensure in Minnesota.
- Amend the compulsory attendance law to require students to attend school until they obtain a diploma or reach the age of 18.
- Reinstate the three percent growth factor in the Adult Basic Education (ABE) formula.
- Increase the funding for adults with disabilities, which has been frozen at \$60,000 for ten years.

RESPECTFUL ENVIRONMENT

- Support option for local governments to provide health insurance for domestic partners.
- Provide a significant increase in the school safety levy.