

**MEETING MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING
December 4, 2012**

PRESENT: Board of Education: Elona Street-Stewart, Mary Doran, Louise Seeba, Jean O'Connell, Anne Carroll, John Brodrick

Director Hardy joined the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Staff: Superintendent Silva, Mary Gilbert, Jaber Alsiddiqui, Liz Keenan, Efe Agbamu, Steve Hoffman, Christine Osorio, Marsha Baisch, Andrew Collins, Sharon Freeman, Kathy Denman-Wilke, Darlene Fry, Michelle Bierman, Michelle Walker, Willie Jett, Jacqueline Statum Allen, Steve Unowsky, Joe Munnich, Kate Wilcox-Harris, Julie Schultz-Brown, Jackie Turner, Harold Turnquist, Kathy Brown, Tim Hoffman, Sara Guyette, Tom Parent, Julie Coffey

Other: Mary Cathryn Ricker, Tony Lonetree, Mila Koumpalova, Nicole Rogers, Alicia Zetah, Felicia Widi, Angie Thornhill

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m.

II. AGENDA

A. Middle School Transitions Update

The Superintendent indicated the goal in Middle Grades Transition is to create consistent, quality middle school programming throughout the district. Common grade configurations and period schedules have been established with new or revised curriculum for increased academic rigor. The application process is being developed in collaboration with Student Placement and the Office of Career and College Readiness in an effort to make the process easier for families and more efficient for the district. SPPS and the SPFT are collaborating to ensure the right licensure for middle school teachers.

The Assistant Superintendent for Middle Schools then began the update. He stated the rationale and goals are:

- That all SPPS middle schools are the community's first choice
- That strong relationships are created
- That a system of transitional programming is established
- That an academically rigorous experiences is provided and materials are relevant
- That a comprehensive parent engagement plan is established and
- That site staff are empowered to improve professionally.

Decisions that have been put in place for the 2013-14 school year are: 1) all elementary schools will become K-5 district wide, 2) all 7-8 middle schools will become 6-8 district wide, 3) sites that are currently 7-12 will become 6-12 district wide and 4) all current fifth and sixth grade students will be transitioning to middle school next year with the exception of the K-8 sites.

The daily period schedule will be a seven period day plus advisory time. Most sixth grade programming is expected to occur in isolation though sixth graders will transition between classes. A study has been done on the financial feasibility of seven period day and it should not have a fiscal impact on the district.

A variety of communication efforts will be made so families are aware of the changes. Community and site-based events will be and have been held to this end. Short-term efforts include letters to fifth and sixth grade parents; information is being worked on to be provided at January Parent Fair and direct mailing contact with families in areas A & C. Long-term efforts include an advertisement film about what is going on in middle schools and a direct phone call marketing campaign.

The middle school curriculum will be consistent across schools and will include a life skills curriculum. Teachers will work through interdisciplinary teaming. Professional development will focus on relationships and adolescent development. Standards-based grading will be utilized with a common report card for all schools. CAMPUS will provide technological support and implementation with a report card template under development. Professional Development needs to be done to bring staff up-to-date on the new format/process.

Student Placement is working on the application process for 2013-14. February 15, 2013 is the on-time application deadline. Current seventh grade students will be grandfathered to their current schools.

The 2013-14 registration process will involve a common registration handbook with individualized sections and 2013-14 core course recommendations. A trimester, two report card process will aid communication. It is proposed that student registration be completed by April 19, 2013.

Staffing for the middle schools is in process recruiting teachers licensed in subject specific areas. Training needs are being assessed and PLC and PD time will be embedded in the teachers' schedule.

A camp, entitled "Camp 67" is proposed as a transition workshop for all incoming sixth and seventh graders.

Two buildings are currently in the building redesign process, Parkway Montessori and Community Middle School. HR is working on staffing with a focus on training and certification; a leadership team is being assembled. Program accreditation is being explored with the American Montessori Society to assist in opening Parkway. Community connections are being established.

A list of key dates was provided for the Board's review.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- The seven period day will allow time for students to get extra help in core subjects as well as electives. Some students will have fewer electives; will there be students with no electives? Response: Yes
- Early registration – how can the District intervene in families setting lower expectations in their placement selection? Response: The focus in the registration process is not on using one data point for decisions but on using multiple data points (teacher recommendation, test scores, etc) to establish the best option for the student. Using CAMPUS and counselors there should be more effective communication.
- Does that mean SPPS has a better ratio of counselors for middle school students? Response: No, it will mean using technology to assist in better responses and class assignments, along with testing results. There are not more counselors unless funding is found.
- Doing the 6th grade in isolation, will this be going forward? Response: Yes, to the extent possible within 6th grade core classes.
- Then why move 6th grade Montessori? Response: The 6th grade recommendation comes from groups very experienced in Montessori.
- Will this result in the loss of leadership opportunities for 6th graders? Response: No, they will have opportunities to be leaders for non-Montessori students. 6th and 7th will be self-contained during the first year. Next year 6 and 7-8 will be mixed. Noncore classes will be mixed in all schools. Grade level standards have been established and must be

met. Some students may be at higher levels if they meet the core standards. Generally, 6th graders will be in 6th grade math classes, some will be in additional classes for help.

- Standards based grading please clarify what this is. Response: It is based on a scale of 1 to 4, which corresponds to exceeds standards, meets standards, partially meets standards and does not meet standards. This will take some retraining for teachers, as it is a new way of looking at grading. Who else is doing standards grading? All metro districts except Stillwater and they are moving toward it. Students must now turn in work in order to meet the standards.
- Will that happen in the high schools? Response: Not currently, there is a larger conversation the State needs to have with higher education on how that transition would happen.
- When will this type of information be provided for parents? Will there be an additional layer between the Parent Fair and registration time? With new terminology and new descriptions, parents need to be brought on board. Response: Outreach is currently at school level. There is a Transitions Website under development that will address some of these issues.
- What will be done for 6th & 7th graders at the beginning of the year? Response: There will be specific activities for parents and students on site at their middle schools. They will be given the opportunity to visit the school before the end of the year and will be provided opportunities to be involved in school activities before it starts.
- For the Parent Information Fair will there be a Middle School Transitions location in addition to a Parkway Middle School location? Response: Yes
- Licensure, what about current 6th grade teachers who do not have middle school licensure, what is the State's stand in terms of allowing a transition year or must they be licensed by September 1. Response: There is a Memo of Understanding between SPFT and the District guiding how this will occur. Teachers will be granted variances based on various criteria. HR has addressed this in hiring practices.
- Regarding Montessori, has SPPS redesigned the process as to who is on the team, specifically with Montessori background and what is parent involvement? Response: There has been no parent involvement thus far. It has been Facilities Planning and the Principal on Special Assignment. The PSA is obtaining feedback from the community and teachers and bringing it back to the design group. There are only three buildings affected by this.
- Since parents cannot walk through Parkway, SPPS needs to find a way to make the decision easier for parents. How will SPPS convince parents to enroll students in Parkway? What about staffing, etc.? Response: Administration has been collecting information on what has been done nationally in order to be sure that a very successful program is developed. Administration will have better picture on staffing before spring break.
- Comment -- Parents are committed to the philosophy of Montessori and want to be sure a leader is assigned who is also committed to the philosophy.
- How will communications reach middle school families? Response: There will be handouts at the Parent Fair and information will be sent to parents. Administration is working through the Assistant Superintendents to encourage 5th grade teachers to call all students/families who are making transitions.
- Hasn't SPPS been grading based on standards for a long time? Response: Yes but it is school-based. Standards based grading is a very significant shift in the way work is gathered and grades are determined. Some schools are used to this (i.e., Battle Creek, Highland) but training will need to be provided to the majority.

B. Update on Transportation

The Deputy for Schools and Business Operations stated the purpose of the briefing was to inform the Board of the staff estimates for transportation for the 2013-14 school year.

The bottom line is school start times have been projected for 2013-14 and there are few changes, there will be 26 fewer buses and costs will be reduced by approximately \$291,000. Key differences from previous years that have lead to these results are:

- The District will be six months ahead on schedules

- All schools move to 6.5 hours/day except Washington which remains at 7.5 hours/day.
- All elementary students (PreK-5) have one-half mile transportation
- This is the first time planning has been done with Areas and Regions as part of the equation.

The three-tier system will continue. First pick-up for Tier 1 is 6:30 a.m., Tier 2 – 7:30 a.m. and Tier 3 – 8:30 a.m. Dismissal will be for Tier 1 – 2:00 p.m., Tier 2 – 3:00 p.m. and Tier 3 – 4:00 p.m.

Route trips will normally not be longer than 45 minutes in length for both a.m. and p.m. For the 7:30 tier there will be 327 a.m. route trips and 292 p.m. route trips. 8:30 start – 285 a.m. route trips and 322 p.m. route trips. For the 9:30 start – 300 for both a.m. and p.m. route trips. These numbers do not include route trips for out of district special education placements, students experiencing homelessness, care and treatment or afternoon Extended Day learning.

A chart was provided showing new schools and schools with a schedule adjustment.

Letters were sent to families outlining changes for those students or schools that will be impacted by changes. Extended time is being kept for Washington in order to continue to collect data on extended time.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- What about high school start time changes? Is SPPS moving toward starting high school later? How will SPPS engage the community on this? Response: First SPPS needs to get parent input on later starting times. DPAC is looking at the pros and cons of switching high schools to a later tier. They recommended SPPS wait one additional year (14—15) in order to allow further consideration. Engagement will begin in the spring on this matter. High schools cannot be isolated without changes to the entire system so this is another reason to wait.
- Have letters gone to all parents in all schools? Yes
- When can we expect transportation cost projections to flat line? Response: We are pretty close right now
- Does SPPS anticipate more schools going to 7.5 vs. fewer? Would there be economies of scale system-wide if the district moves toward that? Response: Yes, there would be savings if the entire district went this way. What is the tipping point? Response: The whole system interlocks so it is difficult to build two separate route systems economically. It would be very expensive to run two separate route systems.

C. 2013 Pay Levy

The Deputy for Schools and Business Operations stated he was providing an update on the status of the Pay 13 levy prior to the evening's hearing and in preparation for the final recommendations to the Board on December 18, 2012.

Key developments since the initial levy presentation in September include:

- Voters approved the SPPS referendum ballot
- The Minnesota Department of Education has issued a new calculation for the levy with the latest adjustments, including the new referendum
- The new State authorized levy shows a 10% increase in total levy over Pay 12 and
- SPPS limited their levy to the referendum increased or 6.1% honoring the Board's promise to "hold the line" on levy.

A chart was provided showing the changes in the following areas: Certified Pay 12, BOE proposed Pay 13 (without the referendum), the MDE calculated Pay 13 with the referendum and the recommendation for the final certified Pay 13 levy amount. SPPS has chosen to "hold the line" and will not go for the full MDE calculated Pay 13 amount of \$138,681,252.

It was proposed the Board certify \$133,719,340 or a 6.1% increase over Pay 12 or the amount of the levy increase.

Another chart provided projections on the Pay 13 tax increase due to the referendum on various estimated market values for homes. Ramsey County calculates property taxes, bills, collects these taxes, and distributes the payments. It provides an interactive site for estimating taxes.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- It was noted Tax Notices went out without the referendum included in proposed taxes. The new estimated 2013 tax after referendum and levy reduction includes the entire \$39 million referendum.
- There was discussion on how to clarify the property value chart for public understanding.

D. SSSC Monitoring: Achievement & Equity VisionCard (Part 2)

Staff provided background on the VisionCards and then presented the Achievement VisionCard results for school year 2011-12. Only areas not covered in the earlier presentation of results were discussed though data was presented for all.

- 1) Proficiency and Growth in **MCA** results was broken out for Reading and Math by race/ethnicity and grade. Reading Vision is >75% of students proficient and >90% of students making medium or high growth. Overall Reading is at baseline (57%) for proficiency and at baseline (73%) for Growth. Caucasian students are at Vision level in proficiency and Progress in growth. No other race/ethnic group is above Progress for proficiency or Baseline for growth.

MCA Reading by grade has Vision at >75% of students proficient and >90% of students making medium or high growth. 3rd, 5th and 6th graders are at Progress in proficiency; others are at Baseline. 4th through 7th graders are at Baseline and 8th and 10th graders are at Concern level in growth.

Math by Race has Vision >75% of students proficient and >90% of students making medium or high growth. Caucasian students are at Progress in proficiency and Baseline in growth. No other race/ethnic group is above Concern. African American and American Indian are at Intervene in math. Math by Race overall, is at 41% (Concern) for proficiency and 67% (Concern) for Growth. The charts also showed placement for race/ethnicity and grades individually.

MCA Math by grade has Vision at >75% of students proficient and >90% of students making medium or high growth. 4th grade leads the way in math proficiency, at Baseline level, while 11th grade is at Intervene. All others are in between at Concern level in proficiency. All grades are at Concern level in math growth, except 8th, which is at Intervene level. 11th grade has the lowest percent proficient and the highest percent making growth.

MCA Science has a Vision of >75% of students proficient and >90% of students making medium or high growth. Overall science results did not change from 2010-11 to 2011-12. 5th grade is at Concern (31%); 8th grade and high school are at Intervene (22% and 29% respectively).

- 2) Early Reading indicators remain virtually unchanged, mostly at Baseline. Kindergarten, Oral Language is at Progress; 1st grade Oral Language is at Concern. Both are at Vision level in letter-sound correspondence.

The **Mondo-Bookshop Assessment** for 2011-12 shows the following:

- Kindergarten: Oral language is at Progress (79%), Text level/comprehension is at Baseline (59%) and Letter-sound correspondence is at Vision (97%).

- 1st Grade: Oral language is at Concern (48%), Text level/comprehension is at Baseline (59%) and Letter-sound correspondence is at Vision (92%).
 - 2nd Grade: Oral language is at Baseline (61%), Text level/comprehension is at Baseline (63%).
- 3) **ACT** participation is at Intervene (60%, up 3 points from 09-10) and ACT composite score of 21 or higher is also at Intervene (36%, down 1 point from 10-11). ACT participation decreased slightly, as did the percentage of ACT-taking students achieving a composite score of 21+.
- 4) **For AP/IB Exams** show achieving a score of 3 or higher on an AP exam is at Baseline (55%, up 9 points from 10-11) and achieving a score of 4 or higher on an IB exam is at Baseline (55%, up 5 points from 10-11). Overall pass rates have increased in both AP and IB, now both are at Baseline with identical percentages passing.

Graduation rates are now calculated differently utilizing the “NGA (National Governors Association)” rather than the NCLB rate for national accountability. The NCLB rate produced much higher numbers (90% for SPPS in 2011). The NGA Rate is similar to the SPPS four-year cohort rate that has been calculated for years but is not the same, so the trend line was “reset.” This is also known as the “Regulatory Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate.”

The NGA rates is calculate by taking the number of graduates who receive a regular or advanced diploma in four years plus the number of students awarded alternative degrees divided by the number of students in the original 9th grade cohort for the graduating class plus transfers in or out. This permits students who graduate with a modified diploma, such as a GED, to be counted as a regular graduate.

NGA Graduation Rate (Vision is >80% graduating in four years) – **4-year adjusted cohort completion rate** was at 57% in 06-07 and is at 64% for SY 10-11 (23% are continuing high school, 6% have dropped out and 7% are unknown). The four-year graduation rate is steadily increasing.

The 2012 Equity VisionCard Results were then discussed. (Vision is <10%, Progress is 10-20%, Baseline 20-30%, Concern 30-40% and Intervene >40%).

- For **MCA Science** gaps grew slightly as more Caucasian students were proficient in Science in 2011-12. Overall, the gaps is 49% (Intervene).
- For **Advanced Coursework** (% completing advanced coursework) the gaps is 39% (Concern) with racial disparity slightly larger from 10-11 to 11-12.
- For **AP Test Scores of 3 or Higher** (% of students passing AP exams) the gap is at 48% (Intervene); all groups increased slightly in percent passing.
- For % of students passing **IB exams with Test Score of 4 or Higher**, increases in all groups left the gap virtually unchanged (slightly higher) but sill at Baseline level (29%).
- **NGA Graduation Rates** show a gap of 27%. As four-year graduation rates have increased, gaps have decreased and are now at Baseline compared to Intervene in 9I-10 and Concern in 10-11.

In the area of **Disproportionality Ratios** (how many times more likely is this student group to experience this outcome than the group with the lowest percentage) results show:

- Gifted and Talented – G/T (how many MORE times likely are other groups to be identified as gifted and talented than the group with the fewest identified (Grades 1-6): Caucasian 46%, American Indian 22%, African American 19%, Hispanic 16% and African American 9.1%. Caucasian students in grades 1-6 ere over four times more likely to have been identified G/T than African American students (46% compared to 9%) This is at Baseline.
- Special Education (how many MORE times likely are other groups to be referred for special education than to the group with the fewest referrals☺ American Indian 4.51%, African American 3.1%, Caucasian 2.41%, Hispanic 2.4% and Asian American 1.6%. All race/ethnic groups are at Vision levels in Special Education referrals, except American Indian, which is at Progress.

- Absences (how many MORE times likely are other groups to be absent 11+ days than the group with the fewest absences of 11+ days)
 - o Elementary – American Indian 44%, African American 30%, Hispanic 28%, Caucasian 20% and Asian Americans 11%.
 - o Middle School – American Indian 49%, African American 38%, Hispanic 27%, Caucasian 23% and Asian American 10%.
 - o High School – American Indian 55%, African American 40%, Hispanic 39%, Caucasian 27% and Asian American 22%.

The largest disproportionality in this area is at Baseline level in Middle School, with American Indian students nearly five times as likely to be absent 11+ days as Asian American students. All other gaps remain at Progress or Vision level.

- Suspensions (how many MORE times likely are other groups to be suspended at least one time than the groups with the fewest suspensions of 1+ times)
 - o Elementary – African American 9.1%, American Indian 6.1%, Hispanic 3.0%, Caucasian 1.4% and Asian American .05%.
 - o Middle School -- African American 25%, American Indian 22%, Hispanic 11%, Caucasian 4.6% and Asian American 2.5%.
 - o High School -- African American 18%, American Indian 15%, Hispanic 8.4%, Caucasian 4.1% and Asian American 2.0%.

Disproportionality increased from 10-11 to 11-12 with the same or lower suspension rates among Asian American, Caucasian and Hispanic students. This is at Intervene level for African American and American Indian students when compared to Asian American students.

The report then moved on to spotlight **Racial Equity Work**. Capacity has been built for district and site leadership and is transitioning to school-wide implementation for all sites January through June 2013. Community, district and schools are collaborating in the development of culturally responsive teaching practices.

The current status of the racial equity work show:

- Training has been underway for some time for the school board, the cabinet with a district-wide equity transformational plan in progress along with department equity plans.
- School sites show 9 Beacon schools, 26 school sites in Phase I (E-Teams working with larger staff) and 24 school sites in Phase II (established E-Teams in Fall, 2012.)

This work requires a system shift and utilization of adaptive solutions and change (i.e., focusing less on suspensions and more on suspendable behaviors). In this area first quarter suspension have decreased this fall for the second consecutive year, reflecting decreases in suspendable behavior. The largest decreases have been among African American and American Indian student groups though inequities remain. Suspensions have decreased for behaviors where suspension is not recommended; last year they made up almost one-quarter (23%) of suspensions, this year they represent 14%.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- What is the difference in numbers in students taking AP vs. IB classes? Response: The numbers will be provided to Board members.
- A request was made to see data on the Inter-relationship between AP and IB; how have numbers changed over time. What are interventions doing? Numbers not only of students taking AP and IB but what it looks like in terms of equity in breakout in pass rates and how these change over time.
- What is underneath this, at the operational level of performance management, is a set of key performance indicators across all district components. Dashboards are being built underneath all of the VisionCards across multiple domains. This is part of multi-tiered principal evaluation where advance coursework is only one part. Over time, the data will be reviewed for all staff along with the check-in process for all principals.

- The Mondo assessments data does that include ELL students. Response: The data is all students for the full year 2011-12.
- What is the ELL students progression from begin of year to the end? Response: You first see development in the letter sound correspondence then later growth in the oral language then text level comprehension. Each grade has its own benchmarks. The data exists so it can be provided.
- Has data been reviewed that cuts across racial lines showing attendance might be one of the most important aspects in proficiency? Response: That has not been done. Students experience multiple challenges beyond attendance, suspension plus other factors impact achievement. There are usually multiple factors in play. It is very difficult to recover from absences of eleven or more days from school. Achievement or lack of it is affected by compound factors and it is very difficult to isolate one factor.
- How is SPPS looking at absence information? Is it being utilized? Response: This is information that is being reviewed by DPAC. Administration will let you know their response when they have had a chance to review and discuss it. This data has been shared, it is public information and has led to discussions among various communities. It helps manage the conversations and what specific challenges are.
- A request was made to see what action steps come from these discussions.

The meeting recessed at 5:55 p.m. for the Levy Hearing.

- Graduation rates are at 64% the “continuing high school,” is that LEAP and Gordon Parks? Are their numbers in there? Response: Yes, that is any students who did not graduate within four years.
- The suspension rate numbers, the adaptive solutions what are some of those and how have similar adaptive solutions addressed the challenge of students who continue disruptive behaviors within classrooms? Response: We cannot stop behavior but we can be proactive about behavior and work with principals so when a student is suspended and they come back there is a plan in place to deal with them. It is establishing conditions, agreements and peer remediation. This changes how SPPS works with students and makes students part of the process by making sure consequences are understood and what adaptations in behavior are expected. Teachers are included in the solution. Another piece is looking at adult behavior and adult teaching pieces to see how that affects behaviors. Defiance is being examined closely. When incidents were looked at, there has been a huge decrease in the defiance category, in bullying and harassment and in attendance.
- Elementary suspensions – how do we coach students to behave differently and how do we look at how adults respond to student behavior in a more constructive manner? When will numbers go in right direction? Response: They are moving in the right direction now; culturally responsive teaching will help. The numbers are going down through all groups so the gap has not changed that much.
- Suspendable behaviors – give examples of what was and is not now. Verbal disrespect, not listening to teacher instructions are a couple examples. The Rights and Responsibility Handbook has defined actual categories for suspensions in great detail. Positive behavior interventions, model rituals and routines are used up front to correct behavior before it becomes suspendable.
- Equity teams look at situations and assess solutions Staff is looking at trend data over time particularly where they are not seeing problems – looking for best practices to move throughout the system. If there is a pattern to a behavior the use of protocols to get to the root of the problem.

MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved, seconded by Ms. O’Connell, the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education accept the report.

Motion Passed.

E. Standing Item: Policy Update

No report was made at this meeting.

F. Work Session

1. **Discussion on Student Recognitions**

Discussion was around concerns that some groups were being missed in the recognitions at the Board meetings. Various points were expressed during the discussion.

- Would like to see equal recognition for academic accomplishments
- How will district get information so they do not miss out on others who may have received a similar award.
- What is worthy of coming to the Board? Need criteria.
- Concern was expressed that someone may be missed if SPPS does only what is in the paper. Need to do it right, need set rules.
- Need equal weight to academic accomplishments
- It is an equity issue
- Like going to schools to present awards
- Like distributing kids throughout the year, need criteria – need to evaluate amount of work involved in spreading it out
- Opportunity gap – need to increase opportunity for other kids than just athletics
- Criteria and location need to be established
- Making part of school level better for families
- Need to devise a system so more families and kids get to participate in meaningful way, center around what is best for students/families. Consider how to change so does not center around Board.
- DPAC and various advisory groups might be good options for input on this
- Letters of congratulations may be option
- Need to address athletic awards as well, not all get to come in for recognition
- One unique aspect in recognitions at board meetings is they are televised

Administration was asked to provide the criteria for awards to Board members before any more is done in this area.

2. **Discussion on Primary for 2013 (Election Contract)**

The Chair noted that no primary can be held in the future unless and until the Board votes to hold a primary. This action must take place at the latest by April 15 in the year of the election. The consensus was to continue with no primary in 2013.

Board members were provided the Ramsey County Election contract for review. The consensus was it would be moved into the Consent Agenda for the December 18 Board meeting.

3. **2013 Board Officer Discussion**

Board members were reminded to express their interest in positions to be acted on at the annual meeting.

The meeting reconvened at 6:37 p.m. with the Parent Committee Resolution discussion and then moved back to pick up additional questions on the VisionCard and the remaining agenda items. The minutes reflect agenda order for ease of research.

G. American Indian Parent Committee Resolution of Concurrence (Immediately following Levy Hearing)

The American Indian Parent Committee chairpersons presented the Indian Education Action Resolution of Concurrence report. The report is required as part of the Minnesota American Indian Education Act of 1988 and is an important tool for parents of American Indian students. The report is made to inform the Board of the recommendations made by the Indian Education Parent Committee Advisory Council. The recommendations are made to

improve the learning outcomes of the students and to strengthen relationships with families. They indicated the Resolution was being submitted without signatures and that they would wait until they received the administrative response before signing off. They then brought forward the following issues to be addressed. (Note: Highlighted issues were the key issues discussed during the meeting.)

1. Communication

SPPS and Indian Education did not effectively communicate with the Parent Committee about several issues including the principal hiring process at AIMS and possible relocation of the Indian Education program.

Action Steps:

- Work with the Parent Committee to develop and implement a clear chain of communication.
- Revisit, and communicate, the Parent Committee's purpose and authority.

Goals:

- The Parent Committee feels that its input is more effectively sought and responded to in future situations.
- Current SPPS staff, leadership, Parent Committee members and community members understand the legal role and authority of the Parent Committee.
- The Parent Committee functions as a group of informed decision-makers.

2. Student Racial Identification:

a. **Inaccuracies in racial identification of American Indian students.**

Action Steps:

- Keep track of all of the races of multi-racial students.
- Develop a transparent and consistently applied process to officially classify students when parents list more than one race for district reporting purposes.
- Work more closely with Indian Education to ensure that all students who are eligible have a completed 506 form.

Goals:

- The number of American Indian students aligns between SPPS official records and Indian Education's records to ensure all other outcomes are also reported accurately.
- SPPS racial information more accurately reflects the student population.

b. **Parents have struggled to get the district to correct their child's race in the system.**

Action Steps:

- Make it easier for parents to change their child's official race when it has initially been recorded incorrectly.

Goal:

- Parents feel that their child's race is correctly described by SPPS.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Please be more specific about student identification. Response: It is particularly relevant when a parent marks the student as multi-racial (i.e., American Indian, African American and Caucasian). This does happen. When the clerk receives the form they have to choose one and they seldom choose American Indian so that student is lost to the American Indian population count and, since the population is so small, each student makes a difference for the American Indian count. This has been this way for decades. The challenge is consistency in choosing race and then in being able to correct it if it is recorded incorrectly. There are several issues here, who makes the decision to decide on which race to choose. Federal guidelines have changed allowing for multiple race recording. That will be checked into and explored. There needs to be better training for the clerks in recording this.

- Indian Ed serves all kids who self identify as Native American. Although the program is operating under grant funding provided for identified students, the program is helping many other students who are not being identified. So it is a funding issue as well.

3. Indian Education Programming

- a. **Many parents are confused about the various programs and services available to them through Indian Education and American Indian Studies.**

Action Step

- Indian Education is currently working with SPPS administrators to develop clear and effective communication materials for students and families

Goal

- American Indian parents and students understand which services and programs they are eligible for and feel that there is transparency in Indian Education and American Indian Studies programming options and eligibility requirements.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Assistance from the Communications Department on marketing the program and what is offered would be a real help.
- The program serves all youth who self-identify. The issue is how reach parents of those kids to be sure parents are informed of what is available. Response: The Title VII Form must be filled out by parents so services can be provided. This means they are enrolled, their parents are enrolled or their grandparents are enrolled.. Staff does follow-up to get this form on file. If they are enrolled, there are added services they can receive. Staff follows up. Once the form is completed, they get all information supplied. If no form is on file, the program does not receive funding for that student. Students have been allowed to participate while the form process goes on. The program is grant funded so services have various focuses. Everyone gets communications including special ed.
- Is this an honor system with the form? No, it is sent to the tribe for verification. Staff have assisted families to become enrolled in tribes as well.
- American Indian kids are in most schools within district so it is difficult to be sure all are included. If the process/services are streamlined and made more transparent it becomes more user friendly for families and takes away the negativity sometimes associated with the current process.
- 506 forms are at the Placement Center and the program has asked that it be distributed if families identify as Native American. It was suggested this be automated in the new enrollment system so the form comes up if Native American is checked.
- First Nations people from Canada are not eligible.

- b. **It is difficult for American Indian families and the Parent Committee to assess the effectiveness of Indian Education programs.**

Action Steps

- Indian Education staff and programs must develop clear and measurable outcomes and complete and report on rigorous and appropriate evaluations of these programs in collaboration with and supported by SPPS REA.

Goal

- American Indian families and Parent Committee members understand the impact of Indian Education programs and services (outcomes of students who are served by the program).

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- The Wilder Research Advisor on the parent committee stated she is looking at measuring outcomes and results of services being provided. Also, there is a

need to focus on how results are communicated back to parents, the community and the district.

c. **Indian Education professional staff are not always welcomed into the SPPS schools to work with American Indian students.**

Action Steps

- Provide additional training for all school staff and administrators about the rights and responsibilities of Indian Education's supplemental services, possibly through Equity Teams.
- Help Indian Education to demonstrate the positive impact of their services so that core instructional staff and school administrators will have reason to be more supportive of these supplementary services.

Goal

- AI students are able to receive the supplemental services for which they are eligible from Indian Education.
- Indian Education staff feel welcomed in all SPPS schools where they serve AI students.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- It was noted that there is a lot of pressure on schools academically so American Indian service staff are not always able to do pull out services as regularly as they would like. It is Federally mandated that the services be provided so there is a need to establish ways to accomplish this with principals.
- Interest was expressed in hearing how, through the administrative response, the extent to which SPPS is weaving mandated programs into how the schedule is created and how staff is instructed to respond.
- Is this equally challenging through grade levels? Response: No, high school is the most challenging.
- Kids consider their academics important so American Indian services need to be creative in providing solutions so can have classes and services both.
- Do you work in Alternative Schools? Response: No, work is pretty much only high schools. There is one guidance counselor to service seven high schools and that is grant funded.
- What happens during this service time? Response: Both cultural and academic services are provided. It is a curriculum that includes how to get through classes to graduation and into college, with specific information on Indian colleges and scholarships. Life skills are also presented..

4. Attendance

a. **American Indian students have the poorest attendance rate of all racial/ethnic groups in SPPS**

Action Steps:

- Early indication is that the new "late bus" at AIMS may be helping some students get to school who otherwise would be absent. Provide ongoing updates from SPPS on the impact of this late bus (and any other initiatives) on student attendance.
- Continue to work with the attendance specialist at Indian Education and with the schools where all AI students attend (not just at AIMS and Harding) to identify, implement, and evaluate practices to improve attendance.

Goal

- Reduce the percent of AI students who are absent 11 or more days by 1-2 percentage points every year for the next 10 years.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Has SPPS done any Native American events such as a summit for parents? Response: No, nothing district-wide. Feast, opening and closing events are

gatherings for families. There have been changes for individual families but more come up behind them who need help as well.

- It is not just about changing the numbers, it is about changing whatever it is that is making the numbers what they are. There has to be an adaptive change in the whole approach of students to attendance. Need to look at changes at systemic level engaging current and new families, how families think about the importance of kids in school.
- A request was made that administration re-compile the administrative response to attendance back through several years – what were the responses and if there was anything innovative. Also, look at the history of attendance in Indian County -- Minneapolis, a couple schools in the Northwest and a couple Indian charters close to reservations and get a look at the issue of attendance in Indian country. Create a profile – what are causal factors and what are incentives to be in school and also where successes are and what broke the cycle. The parent committee could be instrumental in shifting through this information.
- One thing done out of the Attendance Committee is something called the Educational Warrior Campaign to help families and community members see education as important. We know, due to the historical trauma, education is not always deemed important. Due to this campaign, parents made commitments and staff will follow up on them. There needs to be a change of view within the community. We will also be starting a student component where will have educational warrior cards around seven values and teachings.

- b. American Indian parents are confused about SPPS attendance policies and how to ensure their child is being appropriately excused and not penalized for participation in cultural/traditional activities.

Action Steps

- Work with the Parent Committee to ensure its attendance policies (policy 503) are implemented systematically.
- Parents need to be informed of this policy and to understand that all absences (excused and unexcused) count toward the total of all their students' absences.
- All school attendance liaisons and clerks need to be trained on this policy.

Goals:

- SPPS has a clear policy regarding attendance for AI students that is responsive to our participation in funerals and other ceremonies vs. powwows.
- Parents understand this policy and feel it is fairly and uniformly applied.

5. Academics

- a. **A high proportion of American Indian students are not meeting grade-level expectations at all grades.**

Action Steps

- Provide updates regarding MTSS/RTI and other evidence-based approaches to early identification and intervention for AI students, and the effectiveness of these approaches in SPPS. Triangle data should be included with these updates.
- Consider funding opportunities to allow SPPS Indian Education to explore the role of cultural teaching and cultural identity in improving academic outcomes. Note a successful partnership between Anishinabe Academy (in Minneapolis) and the University of Minnesota for this purpose.

Goal:

- Within 10 years, MCA scores of American Indian students will be comparable to White students.

- b. **American Indian parents and students are often not aware of their poor academic status until it is too late to pass the class, pass the grade or graduate.**

Action Step

- We ask SPPS to encourage its teachers to be more proactive in telling parents their student's progress (or lack thereof) toward successful course completion, and to encourage academic counselors to be more proactive in contacting parents if their student is missing credits, failing courses, or otherwise getting off track.

Goal

- Parents and students are informed about their current academic status and proficiency on standard measures.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- A suggestion was made that SPPS start at middle school level to make the importance of credits, college planning, etc. to help students plan. Graduation standards and where students are on credits so students can take ownership.
- Does district look at multi-year plan to pay attention from 6th grade up? Response: Yes SPPS is creating structures so students are aware of where they are.

6. Behavior

- a. Bullying is a significant concern for American Indian students and in some cases bullying is racially/culturally motivated (i.e., where American Indian boys have been bullied about their long hair).

Action Steps

- Ensure that the AI community has a voice as SPPS conducts planning and implements strategies in response to the Governor's Task Force on Bullying's August 2012 report, and more generally we would like to open the conversation with SPPS about how bullying can be prevented.
- Consider programs that promote older peers (high school and college students) to mentor younger AI students for a specific anti-bullying effort.

Goal

- Students and parents report that bullying has decreased and are less likely to claim bullying as the cause of poor attendance.
- The American Indian community is effectively included in the development of anti-bullying initiatives within SPPS.

7. Out-of-School Time Activities

- a. American Indian students do not have adequate access to OST activities that support and enhance their academic success.

Action Steps

- Consider offering programs district-wide that are currently only offered at AIMS and Harding (provide transportation).
- Offer more OST activities that include academic enrichment with fun activities that are relevant to the students' lives and to the curriculum they are learning in school (but NOT more classroom-style learning) to support academic success.

Goal

- A higher proportion of AI students participate in high quality OST activities that support academic success, and parents of American Indian students are more satisfied with the OST programming options available for their students.

- b. American Indian students do not get enough physical activity and have generally poorer nutrition when compared to other groups of students and are therefore at greater risk of obesity, diabetes and other health problems.

Action Steps

- Consider ways of providing more programming for all AI students in the district that includes physical activity and/or other healthy lifestyle integrated with traditional Native practices.
- Explore ways of using district-wide wellness funds to support and enhance the 0.5 FTE that Indian Education currently supports through its diabetes education grant.

Goal

- Students and parents report better nutrition and more physical activity, and are more satisfied with the opportunities available to them through SPPS to improve their own health.

8. Graduation

American Indian students have the lowest graduation rate of all racial/ethnic groups in SPPS.

Action Steps

- American Indian students and parents need more guidance earlier to ensure the students are on track for graduation, and we would like SPPS to be more proactive with parents and their students who are not on track to graduate.
- We would like to discuss more options with SPPS to ensure that when possible in middle school our students are tracked into AP programs and other college prep tracks.
- We have had preliminary conversations with SPPS about how the AVID program is working for AI students who are participating, and we would like to continue to pursue the possibility of creating an American Indian AVID program with SPPS (Darlene Fry).
- Consider the possibility of having one counselor at each school who is assigned to all AI students (similar to the role MaryAnn Sullivan is playing at Harding).
- Evaluate the effectiveness of using academic monitoring to support students in checking their own academic status regularly.

Goal

- 2-3 percentage point improvement in the American Indian graduation rate every year for at least the next 10 years.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Help was asked from the district in getting Native American students more focused on graduation and moving on to college.
- Programs in middle school such as AVID are very important. These need to be adapted for multi-cultures.
- What about Native American participation rates in AVID is it successful and is there access and benefit from College Possible? Response: AVID is in its first year at the Magnet. There is about 1-2% participation overall in the district. AVID needs to be adapted to an American Indian specific AVID. College Possible? Do not have data on this, it will be provided. Want to be sure have access to it. How can more students become involved in AVID?

Next steps is a collaborative effort on the administrative response. The Resolution is due for submission in January. The response is scheduled for the January COB.

III. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:	Mr. Hardy moved the meeting adjourn. Motion seconded by Ms. O'Connell.
Motion Passed.	

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Polsfuss
Assistant Clerk