

**MEETING MINUTES  
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING  
January 11, 2011**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**PRESENT:** Board of Education: Jean O'Connell, Elona Street-Stewart, John Brodrick, Anne Carroll.

Keith Hardy arrived at 5:36 p.m.

Staff: Superintendent Silva, Matt Mohs, Kate Wilcox-Harris, Jaber Alsiddiqui, Kathy Brown, Michelle Walker, Tim Caskey, Suzanne Kelly, Michael Baumann, Joe Munnich, Ivar Nelson, Sharon Freeman, Andrew Collins, Mike Kremer

Other: Kevin Huepenbecker, Eleanor Lieder, Lisa Lieder, Karl Lieder, Jason Rodney, Sarah Lazarewicz, Bob Zick, Daniel Kieler, Leah Findlator

**II. AGENDA**

The agenda was rearranged to accommodate staff.

**MOTION:** Ms. Carroll moved, seconded by Ms. Street-Stewart, that the agenda be revised to move Policy Update to Item A, Technology Update to Item B and the Strong Schools, Strong Communities Discussion to Item C.

**Motion passed.**

A. Standing Item: Policy Update

1. **Revisions to Policy 403.00**

The additional changes made to Policy 403.00 were reviewed. It was noted there have been no additional changes to Policies 601.00 or 602.00 since those that followed their first reading.

The Board indicated the changes made to 403.00 were beneficial and provide clarification in language and the chain of command. Staff stated a meeting of the "policy committee" would be scheduled to review the process/schedule for revisions to procedures.

The policies will be brought forward for their third reading and approval at the January 18 Board meeting.

B. Technology Update

The Chief Business Officer stated staff would provide the Board with a brief update on some of the Information Technology (IT) projects and operations going on in district. Some of these are a setting of conditions to support the new strategic plan. He then asked the Interim Director of Information Technology to provide the update.

1. **General Operations**

He provided data on the work the IT Department does and supports throughout the district. He indicated the department staff are certified in many areas and continue to upgrade their skills and certifications on an on-going basis in order the stay on top of continually evolving technology and applications.

## 2. **Service Desk**

The Service Desk is the single point of contact for all SPPS IT services. Services are provided through a ticketing system which tracks service requests. The ticketing system allows for prioritization of work, helps to identify training opportunities, and builds the IT service management knowledge base so users can find solutions for their issues on-line. It also provides feedback for allocation of resources for infrastructure and training to better serve all of the IT customers.

## 3. **OBI/SPA Project Update**

Oracle Business Intelligence (OBI/) and School Performance Analysis (SPA) provide an environment to facilitate analysis of school related data and district financial data. It will provide the foundation for databased decision-making and facilitates development of dashboards and reports for use by administration, schools, principals, teachers, etc. The dashboards are under development at this time.

In the area of finance, the infrastructure installation is in progress, the initial transformation of the financial data is in progress and training is scheduled for development and use of dashboards.

The project scope and schedule had some replanning on outcomes and is now moving ahead on time.

## 4. **VoIP Telephony**

The intent of the project is to convert all SPPS from analog to digital phones across the entire district. The outcome will create the efficient use of the digital network through phones and video conferencing. All phones are projected to be in place at 80 sites by June 2011. Planning is under way for the removal and disposition of the old equipment.

Telepresence video conferencing is operational with three units currently in operation (two at 1930 Como and one at 360).

## QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION

- OBI – who will have access to the dashboards and data sets? What about out in buildings and to the public? Response: The product will mature over time. The training is in February for dashboard developers. School performance analytics data will be available at the highest levels of district. It is also important that the data is available to teachers and principals. The SPA data is live data and very up to date. As far as the public access, the initial plans are to have data, in dashboard format, available at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. It will be built from the top down and underlies what is being done with accountability and the strategic plan and is a metric check and calibration process. Student learning is what the effort is centered on. Building a data warehouse, husbanding the data and extracting the data in a meaningful and purposeful manner through good data management will get the District to a state where this can be done in an organized and regular manner.

Full training will be provided for users so everyone who can access the District system can access data which affects or is pertinent to them. It will ultimately go to all users. The process is starting with senior management to ensure the system works. The hope is this will help manipulate the data currently available and bring it together in a synthesized manner to assist in informed decision-making. It is also hoped this will facilitate a more lively and user-friendly data center.

- The privacy pieces are critical. The District and public are interested at the executive level decision-making on a larger scale. It was noted it would be valuable to have some of this higher-level information available to stakeholders sooner rather than later.
- This access to data will be valuable in the collaborative representation process (staff, board, and partners) for use in meetings. The District should begin to think in terms of use of its facilities as meeting space because of technology and data availability. Identify the priority areas where information will be shared and have it available.
- Because this information will be more frequently available in all buildings, what applications are being considered in the area of increasing safety? Does the system

connect in ways that are more than data source? Does it connect to other systems in the region where safety is the issue? Response: The current project is laid out to be hyper focused on student performance analytics followed by financials. Right now, it is not building the data warehouse to bring this aspect in; however, there is the potential for bringing in other data but that is on a lower priority level at this point.

- There have been Issues with access to the Campus system being erratic – is this being addressed? Response: Campus accessibility is the number one priority. The District is working to determine where and what the threats to accessibility are. There are threats such as capacity when queries run on large load basis at the incorrect access time. Many custom applications that work off Campus are being off-loaded onto separate cones of Campus so they affect service less. The issue is being addressed currently and work is being done to address the issues.
- What about the VoIP system and emergency calls when the network goes down and/or electricity goes out? Response: The Cisco E-911 phones cannot be compromised so the switches, routes and backup systems are in place to manage that along with an analog backup for all systems.

**MOTION: Ms. Street-Stewart moved the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education receive the IT report with thanks. The motion was seconded by Ms. Carroll.**

**Motion passed.**

C. Strong Schools, Strong Communities Plan Discussion

The Superintendent reviewed the various groups to whom she had presented the Strong Schools, Strong Community Plan. This is a new strategic plan covering the next three years with the goal of improving academic results for all students without exception or excuse. The plan focuses clearly on the needs of students. All of the resources are directed at delivering effective education in every classroom in every school. It does not allow schools to be distracted by competing interests. The plan calls for consistent curriculum and standards throughout the District.

She then turned the presentation over to the Chief of Staff who proceeded to run a video introducing the plan. The Chief of Staff then began the review of the goals and expectations of the plan.

1. Goal 1: SPPS provides an outstanding education for some students. It can provide an outstanding education for all students.

This goal creates the conditions for every school to transform learning by giving teachers not only a well-rounded curriculum, but also the training, direction and support they need to deliver quality instruction to every student. The goal of assuring consistent quality at all schools will strengthen communities and improve achievement.

The expectation is that by 2014 there will be guaranteed delivery of curriculum, better achievement across the school system, principals will be instructional leaders, there will be shared leadership and accountability and data will be used throughout the year to inform and improve instruction.

2. Goal 2: The Strong Schools, Strong Communities Plan assures that all students have quality choices in their own community.

The data shows a predictable pattern of lower achievement for students based on income, race and ethnicity. This goal recognizes that the current choice system does not do enough to address the achievement gap. The data shows students of color and low-income students perform as well as or better in their community schools.

Expectations related to this goal include consistent support in all schools (academic specialists, nurses, libraries, classroom technology, etc.) There will be enrollment and class size targets. There will be a better choice system which offers community and

magnet options, streamlined regional transportation and magnet schools that follow defined criteria. It will provide a clear pathway from elementary to middle to high school.

3. Goal 3: SPPS's traditional methods of balancing the budget that cut people and programs undermines its ability to implement its academic plan.

Goal 3 looks toward to the long-term success of the core functions – teaching and learning – and guides decisions based upon what is known to deliver results for the students. The District cannot continue to operate in the way it has been and expect different results. The District faces a \$20 million shortfall and the State's shortfall could make this situation worse.

Expectations of Goal 3 include investment of resources in those proven programs that clearly demonstrate results for students, the use of zero-based budgeting for departments to assure equity and efficiency in design and central allocation of funds to better serve all schools.

She went on to say it is essential for the future of the District that partnerships are formed to help meet the needs of the students. These would include:

- Partnerships where principals are accountable to one another for the achievement and readiness of students at transition grades.
- Partnerships where teachers, students and families share accountability for being in school and focused on learning.
- Partnerships with the School Board, funders, City and community organizations that will support and enhance the District's efforts to improve academic achievement.

The Chief of Staff then moved on to look at the timeline for the plan which will involve a roll out over three years. In 2011, the plan includes:

- New programming at Benjamin Mays in Mandarin Chinese adding Kindergarten in 2011 and one grade level each year to k-2 by 2013.
- Relocations will include:
  - Creative Arts High School to former downtown Wellstone site.
  - Open World Learning Community, grades 7-12 to former downtown Wellstone site
  - AGAPE High School to former University Avenue site of Creative Arts High School (ending current AGAPE site lease)
- Discontinue Four Seasons A+ Elementary (enrollment projected to be fewer than 300). Options for the students include: Year-round at Crossroads Montessori or Crossroads Science and Arts at Linwood/Monroe or Mississippi
- Discontinue Open World Learning Community, grades Kindergarten through six and the upper grades relocated as noted above.
- Changes in programming or services would include:
  - For Achievement + Schools – seeking a waiver to reduce busing for students, allowing transportation for students who live further than one-half mile from school. The addition of 1-hour instruction to the school day. These schools are Dayton's Bluff Achievement Plus Elementary, John A Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary, Jackson Preparatory Magnet, Maxfield Magnet, Franklin/North End.
  - Barack and Michelle Obama Service Learning Elementary – inclusion of Pre-K through 6 prep program; uniforms will be utilized, addition of 7th grade in 2012-13 and 8th grade in 2013-14.
  - Language immersion at Phalen Lake Hmong Studies Magnet School will become a two-way Hmong/English Immersion.
  - Expansion of grades will occur at Ames/Sheridan (add 7th grade in 2011-12, add 8th grade in 2012-13) and at American Indian/World Cultures – add 7th grade in 2011-12 and 8th grade in 2012-13.
  - Grade levels moving at Adams Spanish Immersion Magnet and Highland Park Elementary where 6th grade classrooms will move to Highland Park Junior High School.

The Chief of Staff began to review the proposed changes occurring in 2012-13 which included:

- New programs would include the former Roosevelt West Side School of Excellence becoming kindergarten through 5th grades; the former site of Homecroft Elementary becomes ECFE and special education programs; the former site of Sheridan Elementary becomes special education programs; Wheelock Early Education becomes special education programs and the former site of Parkway becomes programming with sixth through 8th grades.
- L'Etoile Du Nord – French Immersion will relocate into the former Western Avenue site of Open World Learning Community
- This year is an intermediate step in reducing magnets to community schools, transportation will be limited (no longer a district-wide option) for: Battle Creek Elementary, Frost Lake Magnet, Galtier Magnet, Hancock-Hamline University Collaborative Magnet, Mississippi Creative Arts Magnet, Riverview West Side School of Excellence. High schools will be affected although District and Regional magnet options within high schools will have additional transportation options.

#### QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION

- Are special ed programs being added? Response: No the programs are being moved out of leased space into district space which will provide them with many more options within a site actually designed for educational uses. It will also provide some minimization of transportation and offer the programs in sites across the city.
- Right now next year the plan for Open is 7-12, then it moves to 8-12 then 9-12. This needs to be made very clear to the community.
- There is a difference in philosophy between Open and Creative Arts how will that work? Response: The building will become a cooperative effort to maximize resources where they share the possibilities for students between the schools. Schools need to become a physical space for learning and the kids are embedded into one shared space and taking advantage of the options this offers.
- The high schools explain the regional and magnet options, how do they break out? Response: The boundaries for them separate the city into two areas north/south or east and west. Regional schools will serve specific areas. Regions are still being defined.
- Does a district magnet trump a regional magnet? Response: An analysis needs to be done in this area particularly with the help of transportation.
- There have to be very clear pathways into particular programs for children to move along.
- There is the statewide open enrollment law where a family can send their child to a different district... Response: This must be done if there is space it is the law. Once they are in through open enrollment they can stay.
- There is a gap in the Arts – there appears to be no arts 6-8 and only Creative Arts 9-12. Response: There is a middle school for arts in Monroe. Creative Arts is open for everyone. It will be run as a parallel program but is a complicated issue which will require additional review.
- Arts – secondary arts equity across schools and quality of programs between schools. There should be equity in all in science, math, arts, etc.
- RE the Communication piece – the way it is written some schools seem to be limited to special focus areas only so this needs to be clarified so people know regular programming is also available.
- Equity will be achieved through the allocation of resources and managed allocation to the schools.
- Does administration plan to communicate specifically with site councils? Response: The District needs more parent involvement; the change is in the move to central allocation. It would be good to explain to them what their future roll will be (PTOs and site councils).
- As the District improves the way it identifies some of changes the establishment of a glossary would assist in consistency. There are a lot of new terms (learning campuses, wards and parks and recs, etc) the definition will vary across entities so it would be beneficial to find a common definition or a map showing what the various site references are and where. Will there be an SPPS “booklet” in parks and recs and libraries?

- The State system to identify your voting precinct through your address, does the District anticipate doing something similar? Response. The Chief Business Officer indicated this could be done the capacity already exists. It is just a matter of aligning it as a project. The comment was made it would be beneficial for staff and particularly for families.
- Look at the design district-wide and create pathways for use by staff and families.
- There is a part of the community who is not computer literate so a telephone menu option would be beneficial as well.
- How will changes to the documents and plans be communicated to the Board? Response: Perhaps through weekly updates in the Friday communication but an overview with a recap list as a COB standing item under School & Program Changes.
- Can this be done for the public on the website? Otherwise, they will not know what has changed; they need to be aware of what is happening. Response: This is also true of staff.
- On the maps, the areas are fundamental at the K-5 level but at the middle and high school, level there is more choice and flexibility. The changes allow choice but not as wide a choice as previously allowed. There is a net gain through increased opportunities and access. Response: The aim is that in any class in any part of city standards are the same, there is to be top quality teaching and to quality rigor for all students to be successful. The District is changing to reach academic achievement for all students. There are many outside perceptions that a school is a great school, there must be an internal perception that a school is a great school. It works both from inside and outside.

Staff reviewed the upcoming community information sessions to roll the plan out to the community.

D. Standing Item: School & Program Changes – covered above

E. Work Session

1. **Assignments for Outside Representation** to Committees/Organizations

**MOTION:** Ms. Street-Stewart moved the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education retain the assignments for representation to outside committees and organizations as currently made for coming year unless the assigned representative expresses interest is expressed in discontinuing their representation to a specific group. Motion seconded by Ms. Carroll.

**Motion Passed.**

2. **Listening Sessions**

Since there is a public information session on the Strong Schools, Strong Communities Plan scheduled for January 27 (the same evening as the Boards' Listening Session), the Board decided to reschedule the Listening Session to March 31 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. (Available Directors: Ms Carroll, Ms. O'Connell) at the same location (Hancock-Hamline). It was also suggested the April 21 session be rescheduled to April 28 at the same location pending the calendar being open for that date. This later proved not to be feasible so the date remains the same.

### III. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION:** Mr. Brodrick moved the meeting adjourn. Motion seconded by Ms. Carroll.

**Motion Passed.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marilyn Polsfuss, Assistant Clerk