

**MEETING MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD
APRIL 20, 2010**

PRESENT: Board of Education: Anne Carroll, Jean O'Connell, Elona Street-Stewart,
John Brodrick, Vallay Varro, Keith Hardy, Kazoua
Kong-Thao

Staff: Superintendent Silva, Bill Larson, Kate Wilcox-
Harris, Denise Quinlan, Michael Baumann, Suzanne
Kelly

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m.

II. AGENDA – BUDGET UPDATE

A. Presentation – Overview and General Reduction Recommendations

The Superintendent stated the presentation was a compilation of those items where there was general agreement or where there were changes made from what was previously presented.

The Chief Business Officer stated the recommendations represented an intersection and alignment of two key areas – Academics, high quality programs providing educational excellence to all and Operations, the responsible management of fiscal and capital resources.

The guiding principles and priorities in the process have been to expand excellence, to increase access, to ensure equity and to address the needs of all SPPS students and families.

He reiterated the shortfall remains at \$27,200,000 as March 2, 2010. Reductions that were approved by the Board in earlier meetings totaled \$18,487,500. This represents reductions of \$500,000 in school programming, \$500,000 in facility usage, \$6,487,500 from centrally administered programs and services, \$10,000,000 from schools, academics, and labor adjustments of \$1,000,000. The remaining shortfall which is address with reductions outlined at this meeting is \$8,712,500.

The reductions were divided into three areas and were presented as such.

• Part A: General Areas of Agreement

Centrally Administered Programs/Services

- o Central Administration cuts identified as of 4/13/10
(Total anticipated reduction is \$1,580,000) \$ 944,000
- o Instructional Services (a reduction of 14 academic content
Coach positions established in FY 09 with one-time-only state 1,288,000
Money)
- o Security (Change in 24/7 monitoring, elimination of FTEs with
Greater utilization of technology and automation) 100,000
- o Instructional Services (Reduce SY 10-11 budget since MONDO
purchase is complete) 1,000,000

School Programming

- o Staffing (Share principals between adjacent low enrollment schools) 700,000

Operational Programs/Services

o Operations and Maintenance (Change approach to summer lawn Maintenance)	35,000
o Buildings (Change temperature set points 2 degrees each season)	400,000
o Athletic Fields (Field would be maintained from intra-school funds.)	150,000
o Swimming Pools (Close 4 of 12 pools)	200,000

The Superintendent then moved on to discuss revisions which had been made in certain areas of Part A.

- **Itinerant Instrumental Music Instruction**

She indicated a compromise solution had been found for this program and she was recommending the grade 4-6 instrumental music program be moved from the schools and the school day to ALC after school programming. This would be a change in service deliver method with several positive aspects: classroom instruction time would be maximized, as there would be no loss of class time instruction as there is currently, music could be offered twice per week and it would provide the opportunity to extend enrichment opportunities in other creative arts areas as well. Transportation would be provided to the students taking advantage of this opportunity. This change would require a reduction of 10.6 FTEs. These individuals would have the opportunity to teach through ALC at extended day contracted rates. This change is projected to save \$750,000. Funding would come through ALC, not from the general fund.

The Board would be asked to continue to fund \$150,000 from the general fund in order to contract with community agencies that deliver art and music programs. This could provide even more diverse music and art programs after school.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- o It is good to see an alternative provided. This is an attractive solution which does not conflict with academic time or Fridays. What about kids in after school programming using that whole time for academics? Would they be precluded from participating or is this the same issue facing them in regular day? Yes, it is happening anyway during academic instruction time; lessons are about ½ hours plus group lesson time. This option provides more opportunities for those students who are academically behind and who also want to participate in enrichment. For these students, SPPS plans to pilot the Saturday school concept to allow students who are academically behind to have another option for instructional time. This extended time would be exclusively for academics. This new opportunity has been successfully utilized with GRAD enhanced study. This would provide up to 30 more days of instructional time for students who want to participate. Time on task on academic work is the only way the achievement gap will be closed.
- o As move to after school programming this will be an opportunity for many students who did not have the opportunity during the school day to participate.. Has administration thought about making sure as this program expands that it is offered to more students. Response:; If parents consider this an opportunity to use for the enrichment piece every student will be invited to participate. This is not a remedial program/time it is an opportunity for students who want to achieve more. Things such as chess club, music, reading, the arts, etc that the district has not been able to provide previously because most resources have been concentrated on improving proficiency.
- o Transportation for the after school ALC. Is that already provided? This is not an additional cost? Transportation for ALC is paid out of the ALC budget. This is a better use of buses, it maximizes resources in that more students would be transported rather than the few currently being accommodated.
- o Please confirm the \$750,000 in cost savings is from the salaries of the FTE's. Yes, it is the salaries. On additional piece of information, the people teaching after school students need to be licensed and they would be paid out of ALC funds.

- o What would be the impact of elementary and secondary participation? The relationship between elementary and secondary instrumental participation and the effect elementary cuts would have. Administration was asked to provide that information. Administration was also formally requested to provide, within a reasonable timeframe, an updated comprehensive arts plan to the Board; to look at music within the context of the bigger picture of arts education in St. Paul; the entire picture. Response: The plan expired in 2005. This is doable for administration by the beginning of the next school year. This would be an updated plan representing the proposed changes and maximizes resources across the district. Administration will need to be realistic about what can be afforded as well as how to get involvement from the community, agencies and the city to maximize community and district dollars.
- o Over the summer to what extent is it realistic to believe anything new or different might be part of the 10-11 school year? Can some of this happen through partnerships, special pilots, by second semester? Response: Administration could not commit to anything right now, there need to be additional conversations around arts education in order to align it across the board.
- **Transportation**
Originally this was proposed to be \$1,000,000 from the change from after school programming. This was changed due to the piloting of moving ALC extended day academics to Saturdays. So there will now be both after school and Saturday programming. This portion (\$373,900) comes from ALC funds and represents a saving to the general fund. This is to pilot the Saturday school to see how effective it is, to see what gains can be achieved and how the opportunity is embraced by the community.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION

- o Will this Saturday pilot be for all students, K-12, what are the details? Response: It will be piloted for all students. It may start in October or November. It will be focused precisely on the areas of student need. It will establish "academies" to address the areas of specific need. It will be almost like individualized IEP plans. In some way this should be connected to what the City is doing in order to maximize resources. The City opens several centers for after school and weekends. This is how to maximize the use of space available through offerings of SPPS programming and connected to other things the City provides so students are engaged most of the day on Saturday in an environment where they are committed to learning.
- o The \$373,900, where does this come from? Response: It is a mix for Saturday and for after school; specific amounts are not available between the two. It is to supplement the transportation amount paid out of ALC funds.
- o This number represents? Funds from the general fund which would be saved on transportation costs. The costs are more, but since they are not from the general fund, the Board would not be acting on those.
- **Athletics**
Modifications to the middle school athletics proposal would be to retain middle school athletics and pay for it from the savings realized from the discontinuance of the Arlington High School and Hazel Park Middle School athletic programs. This would allow the program to be maintained in the remaining middle schools. There are over 1,500 students participating in the programs after school in the middle schools. The savings would be \$250,000 from Arlington and \$39,000 from Hazel Park. This is also a way to unify as a community around an issue; this is a community issue. This would be a total of \$289,000.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- o The Washington athletic program costs would carry over from their current allocation into their new location? Yes, there would be an offering of athletics in Washington for grades 7-10; it is in their allocation.

- o The Superintendent was asked to provide the details on athletics to the Board.
- o Okay, this gets us through this year, what about next year? Response: The reality is when you combine a 7-12 there are savings because athletics is not being offered in two buildings. For the next middle school opening, there should be plenty of students. That would be the proposed Hazel Park Montessori Middle School offering a grade 6-8 opportunity.
- o A Board member encouraged administration to looking at a fee structure for all athletics for sustainability. Response: Athletic directors are aware of this. As a system there may need to be more done around fee structures. Or, perhaps, as has been suggested, donations, by interested parties, could be made to the St. Paul Foundation specifically directed to athletics. There have been initial discussions around this idea. It would be a tax-deductible donation which families might want to take advantage of. The funds could then be distributed equitably among all schools. Community and family members would need to be willing to provide additional dollars and this would be a way to do it outside of the schools.
- o These savings can only happen if we move ahead with the closing of Hazel Park and Arlington? Yes, it is a domino effect. If Arlington is kept open there will be no savings.

MOTION: Ms. Street-Stewart moved the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education move all of the Part A amounts and recommendations forward to the Board Meeting for discussion and adoption. Motion seconded by Ms. Carroll.

Motion passed.

Discussion on the reporting out of the meeting and public comment occurred to ensure the Board heard the public's comments prior to taking final actions on any of the proposals.

- **Part B: Co-location of schools**

This is the co-location of school programs, two schools sharing one building. The recommendation is based on enhancing the programming the students receive with the dollars each building can produce. Some of the small programs recommended for co-location cannot provide an adequate program for the small number of students in those buildings; the money barely covers the teachers and classrooms and does not suffice to offer adequate additional support services of nurses, counselors, etc. The dollars to run a building with less than 320-350 students is not adequate to provide a world-class education to students. The recommendations looked at schools with projected enrollment of 280 or less and paired those schools with another larger school in close proximity. The recommendation is to keep all students together and move them with staff to the new co-located building with the idea that they would share resources and provide more resources to students. The recommendation also includes the temporary closing of eight buildings. The recommendation is:

To Co-Locate Ames with Vento; Franklin with North End, Prosperity Heights with Hayden Heights, Sheridan with Highwood Hills and Hazel Park with Battle Creek Middle School. And

To temporarily close eight buildings: Ames, Hazel Park, Longfellow*, Prosperity Heights, Wellstone, Roosevelt*, Sheridan and Franklin. (* Closures announced 6/16/09).

The would result in a savings of \$2,586,500.

MOTION: Ms. O'Connell moved, seconded by Ms. Street-Stewart, the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education move forward to the Board Meeting for discussion and adoption the co-location of Ames with Vento; Franklin with North End, Prosperity Heights with Hayden Heights, Sheridan with Highwood Hills and Hazel Park with Battle Creek Middle School and, further, to temporarily close, for up to three years,

eight buildings: Ames, Hazel Park, Longfellow*, Prosperity Heights, Wellstone, Roosevelt*, Sheridan and Franklin.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- o Elaborate on what happens to the co-location scheme if a nonviable number of families from the temporarily closing buildings choose the designated receiving school. What happens with staff, principal, programming, etc.? Response: Every building is using this opportunity to work together to look at what could be done together, arrange time for student visits, discussed what could be combined or what additional services could be offered and how to avoid double hiring situations. Most of the teachers will be able to stay; there may be some transition on how to use resources between both buildings. As an example, Hazel Park met with Battle Creek, between the two staffs they decided to consolidate into one middle school and are beginning discussions on how to accomplish this. This shows the leadership and the quality of human capital within the district. They realized they need to do the best with what they have and decided to consolidate programs. Each building will address the changes in a different way. Franklin is a music program and to be a really good music program they needed additional dollars. Moving to North End for the first year Franklin will continue with the music focus and work with North End to benefit the students.
- o Hypothetical issue: School A has 290 kids, 100 decide to go to School B. If staff works together with the families, what is hoped is that most will see the benefits of the change and the attrition will not be severe. This is being done now so that the Placement Center has time to work with these families and the District then is aware of how to allocate dollars based on number of students in a building and so staffing decisions can be made. That is the time critical nature of this decision.
- o A Board member expressed concern that there will be enough attrition to other districts to nullify any benefits of these changes and he was not comfortable moving forward with this proposal.
- o Over a number of years the receiving and sending schools have histories of successful efforts to work with their larger communities and their school communities. They are certainly capable of working to support families and address concerns. Concern was expressed that if the Board and administration do not move forward there will continue be a to delay to the budget development process as well as hampering families in making choices for their children's educational future.

Director Street-Stewart noted there was an omission in the proposed motion and asked to amend the motion to perfect and clarify a process. The maker, Director O'Connell, agreed to the amendment.

RECOMMENDATION TO AMEND: that the Committee of the Board move forward to the Board Meeting for discussion the closure of, effective June, 2010 for a period of up to three years, the following schools: Ames Elementary, Prosperity Heights Elementary, Sheridan Elementary, Franklin Music Magnet and Hazel Park Middle School Academy and that effective July, 2010 to co-located the Ames Elementary program at Bruce F. Vento Elementary School; the Prosperity Heights Elementary program at Hayden Heights Elementary School; the Sheridan Elementary program at Highwood Hills Elementary School; the Franklin Music Magnet program at North End Elementary School and the Hazel Park Middle School program at Battle Creek Middle School.

Motion to Amend Passed

- o The question was raised as to why the Board is required to take action on co-locations? The General Counsel stated what is being discussed is a co-location or relocating the geographic site. The Board is required to act on that pursuant to MN Stat. § 123.B.02 Sub. 2. If the Board is relocating a school, it has to identify the destination it is being relocated to. In response to a hypothetical proposition, the Counsel responded, in regard to events occurring in the future, if the two schools

decided to combine in future, under the same statute the Board would have to act to establish a new school. The statute requires the Board to act with respect to establishing schools or grades, organizing schools or grades, altering schools or grades or discontinuing schools and grades. Depending upon circumstances the Board may need to decide to discontinue a particular school or establish a new school perhaps under a new name.

- o It was stated there is a perception issue involved. It must be made clear that regardless of the Board decision there is still individual choice and choices between schools so there is space for families to move within the proposals being addressed.. Response: The Superintendent responded, SPPS is a school of choice, the only thing administration is trying to do is reduce the number of buildings. SPPS has too many buildings and not enough students, that is the bottom line. There needs to be a \$30 million cut this year and additional cuts of at least \$23 million over the next two to three years. The district needs to address articulation in all programming and establish best practices. There are buildings that are providing the minimum needed to open the doors; teachers are stretched to max. What is being done is to maximize opportunities for student communities within a building; those students will be taken and moved to another building. The Placement Center will be there to offer many opportunities/options for families, as they will be treated as first choice on-time applicants. If the decision is delayed, the choices become narrower. Most co-located schools are neighborhood which means no transportation; transportation will be provided to the new collocated sites. The choice is for the parents. Families are being provided the opportunity to be together but that is the parents' decision to make.
- o The General Counsel restated the proposed motion stating for many years the district has operated three separate schools at the Rondo Center. The five new co-located schools would be no different than that. This motion does not limit choice or the Board from doing anything in the future, it simply provides for the closing of five schoolhouse buildings and taking the program and changing its geographic site for next year.
- o A request was made to administration to make available to the public, on the district website, the costs for the temporary closure of the buildings; the costs for maintaining the closed buildings. The Superintendent reminded the Board the changes were not only to save dollars but the changes are being made to provide a better education to the students and to close the achievement gap.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: Director O'Connell moved, seconded by Director Street-Stewart, that the Committee of the Board move forward to the Board Meeting for discussion the closure of, effective June, 2010 for a period of up to three years, the following schools: Ames Elementary, Prosperity Heights Elementary, Sheridan Elementary, Franklin Music Magnet and Hazel Park Middle School Academy and that effective July, 2010 to co-located the Ames Elementary program at Bruce F. Vento Elementary School; the Prosperity Heights Elementary program at Hayden Heights Elementary School; the Sheridan Elementary program at Highwood Hills Elementary School; the Franklin Music Magnet program at North End Elementary School and the Hazel Park Middle School program at Battle Creek Middle School.

The Motion Passed (6 Yes, 1 No (Hardy))

- **Part C: Arlington**

The original proposal for Arlington was to discontinue the high school program; that the 2010-11 students grades 11-12 will move to the remaining 10 high school sites in SPPS and that the building will reopen Fall 2010 as Washington Technology Secondary School grades 7-10, with grade 11 being added in 2011 and grade 12 in 2012. The estimated savings would be \$913,500.

The Superintendent stated she was recommending the amendment of the recommendation to allow this year's on-track to graduate 11th graders to stay at Arlington one more year and to graduate as the last class to graduate from Arlington in 2011. She reiterated the students must be on-track or be on-track through summer school.

She went on to state the current 10th graders would move to another high school with two years to acclimate to the culture and continue their education.

MOTION: Ms. Street-Stewart moved, seconded by Ms. Carroll, to move forward to the Board of Education meeting for discussion (1) to discontinue Arlington Senior High School except for those of the senior graduating class of 2011 who are on-track to graduate, which will remain at Arlington, (2) relocate Washington Technology Middle School to the Arlington Senior High School schoolhouse and (3) reconfigure the grades at Washington Technology Middle School from grade 7-8 to grades 7-10, all effective July, 2010.

Motion Passed (6 in favor, 1 No (Hardy))

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- o Thanks were extended for finding an option for the juniors. This group would only have options for academics and athletics? Response: The ROTC Program will continue. For sports there are a couple options: they can join the Washington 7-10 group or find a way to participate with another high school. Administration cannot do a whole athletic program for only 150 some students. Concern was raised about whether those on scholarship track will keep that opportunity and also the robotics scholarships which are available.
- o There needs to be a deeper discussion on expenses; the cost differential with the new proposal and moving to a 7-10 plus 12.
- o Of the current 11th grade students – what percentage are in the on track category? Administration indicated they were gathering that data and it would be made available.
- o Concern was expressed that it is critical kids have time to make things up as there are still many variables out there.
- o Administration noted students can now also graduate after they complete summer school at end of summer.

- **Wellstone**

The Superintendent reviewed the recommendation. She outlined the reasons for the move. Wellstone is housed in a building with seven floors and there is a lot of wasted academic time with the students moving between floors. There is \$11,000 paid out each month in parking which would be a savings. The program is popular and moving would allow expansion of the program. Administration is exploring the elementary alignment of the BioSmart Program in Wellstone to meet the articulation need of that program.

MOTION: Mr. Brodrick moved, seconded by Ms. Carroll, that the Committee of the Board recommend the following motion be moved to the Board of Education meeting: To temporarily close, effective June, 2010 for a period of up to 3 years, the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Elementary schoolhouse and to relocate, effective July, 2010, the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Elementary program at the Washington Technology Middle School schoolhouse.

Motion passed.

II. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: **Ms Carroll moved the meeting adjourn; seconded by Mr. Hardy.**

Motion Passed.

The meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Polsfuss
Assistant Clerk