

**MEETING MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING
August 24, 2010**

PRESENT:

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

Staff: Superintendent Silva, Suzanne Kelly, Mike Kremer, Kevin Umidon, Michael Baumann, Kathy Brown, Denise Quinlan, Kris Emerson, Andrew Collins, Sharon Freeman, Leslie Sandburg, Rebekah Doyle, Jaber Alsiddiqui, Howie Padilla, Jackie Turner, Barbara DeMaster, Mary Kelly, Matt Moh, Kate Wilcox-Harris, Heidi Bernal, Michelle Walker, Joe Munnich, Rich Valerga, Laurie Olson, Kathy Denman-Wilke, Andrew Mosca

Other: Stanley Gardner, Rosemarie Sorini, David Nystrom, Phillip Peterson, Angie Thornhill, Dianna Johnson, Julie Hutcheson Dourmund, Felicia Widi, Debra Godfrey, Virginia Godfry, David Cournoyer, Jill Fairbanks, Ryan Fairbanks

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:40 p.m.

II. AGENDA

- Joint Academics and Operations Committee (AOC) and Capital Expenditure Advisory Committee (CEAC) Report and Recommendations for Capital Bonding Projects
- American Indian Education Parent Committee Resolution of Concurrence Report
- Work Session: Schedule Remaining SY 2010-11 Board Meeting Dates

A. Joint Academics and Operations Committee (AOC) and Capital Expenditure Advisory Committee (CEAC) Report and Recommendations for Capital Bonding Projects

AOC and CEAC members were complimented on their collaborative efforts in bringing the recommendations forward.

The CEAC Chair presented a process overview that begins with the building administrators reviewing their data and submitting a priority ranking of their top three deficiencies based on the Facilities Conditions Assessment (FCA) and Educational Adequacy Assessment (EAA) data. Building administrators were also asked to submit a single additional proposal for their building. The CEAC and AOC met separately to discuss distribution of capital bond funds and to recommended proposals to move forward. CEAC and AOC then met together to finalize a joint recommendation.

Their recommendation was for the Board to approve the following capital expenditures:

Capital Bonds Available	\$15,000,000
• District-wide Project (Direct Digital Control [DDC])	1,000,000
• A 10% Contingency Fund	1,500,000
• Project Management (Salaries)	700,000
• Large Scale System Changes (LSSC)/Programmatic Changes	1,000,000
• Undesignated Projects	500,000
• "Top 3" Priorities by Site	6,482,808

• AOC/CEAC Recommended “single” proposals	4,358,025
Total	\$15,540,833

This recommendation resulted in an overage to the \$15 million of \$540,833. This difference will be covered from rollover funds from the previous year (or it could also be covered from the contingency fund or through undesignated project funds).

The CEAC Chair indicated proposals were assessed based on a set of criteria. Proposals that were given less priority were those that

- Resulted in added square footage
- Focused solely on “non-academic” needs
- Resulted in sustained unfunded operating costs.

Proposals which were viewed favorably include those

- Resulting in long-term efficiencies or reductions in operating costs
- Eliminated deficiencies aligned with site priorities
- That had an impact in terms of “daily” use
- That positively impacted the greatest number of students
- That supported “district-wide” infrastructure/initiatives
- That eliminated gross inequities
- Those whose total cost of ownership could be discerned
- Those whose return on investment was superior, and
- Those which focused on safety in the schools.

The “Top 3” priorities are determined by sites from FCA/EAA data. All sites were given the opportunity to submit ranking forms. Top projects requested by schools included: fixed projectors and smart boards, marker boards and tack boards, card key access systems, additional electrical outlets in classrooms, teacher storage and cubbies, site marquees, dedicated drop-off areas, additional data ports in learning areas and playground/playfield improvements.

Next steps will begin with Board approval of the recommended capital bond expenditures on 9/21. Planning and design of projects will begin on 9/22. Building administrators will be informed of the capital projects that will occur at each site the following week. Authorization of the sale of the capital bonds will occur on 10/19, approval of the sale on 11/16 and the actual sale on 12/14.

It was noted this year’s timeline saves the District money as it allows for design and bid solicitations during a time of year which has a more favorable market.

The specific list of 2010-11 Recommended Projects to Award was made available for review.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- How is deficit being covered? Response: There was approximately \$2.5 million which was carried over from last year into this year. Additionally, the deficit could be covered through the contingency or undesignated projects funds.
- DDC, at \$1 million/year how long will it take to get all facilities completed. Is there reason to use carryover to do this more quickly? Response: There are 10 sites left which have not received the DDC. It is projected that they will be addressed in next year’s cycle of funding.
- A Board member expressed Interest in hearing if further thought had been given on how to provide feedback to applicants on their proposals. Why the decisions were made so the community of the schools have better guidance for future requests and to close the loop in the process. Response: CEAC believes feedback is vital; it is part of the process which needs to take place. However, there are staff and time limitations to be considered. One thing feedback would help is avoiding the waste of effort for sites who reapply the following year for things which were rejected. CEAC wanted feedback to go to every site on items

which were rejected. Administration indicated there simply are not enough staff to contact each school. What will be done is schools will be notified that if they are planning to resubmit something already submitted they should first contact the Department of Facilities and Maintenance. Projects were recommended which affected the most students and improved academic performance. Schools did receive a communication that projects would be prioritized to align all schools and resources. Administration will work on how to communicate to the principals so they can communicate the process to those staff who establish/prioritize their initial requests.

- Examples of areas for large-scale system change and undesignated were requested.
- A Board member commented that there are new principals, staff and site councils so administration needs to make a comprehensive effort to provide for a deeper understanding in writing for them about why the change was made, what the criteria are and who to contact if they have additional questions. There needs to be a more directive “teaching” effort, administration must distribute information to those involved in the process. The Superintendent instructed the Executive Director of Operations to find a way to do this communication.
- CEAC and staff were complimented on addressing the issues of managing school environments through technology, addressing safety and security and improving equipment throughout the buildings to address issues of equity. The community needs to know the District is improving all of its schools consistently and the upgrading at the facilities is a benefit to the families, students as well as to the community. It is important not only to understand the rationale and priority ranking criteria but the students need to begin to understand that this is an investment for their benefit so they take ownership of it.
- The comment was made it is no longer unusual to talk about co-located so there is an increased need to be more adaptive in the environment. Perhaps a different priority for coming years should be to make facilities more flexible and adaptive. Staff and the community need to recognize the District is more willing to consider change even if buildings are not ready to adapt to those changes. The District needs to become as adaptive, flexible and up-to-date as possible. Response: As the District brings infrastructure up-to-date and provides more commonality between buildings, it will become easier to move among/across schools. Everyone seems to be much more focused on technology.
- Several schools were co-located this year, was work done outside of the submissions to get ready for students moving into those locations? Hazel Park does not appear to have made a submission, is this so? Response: LSSC work is for the co-location changes as schools are adapted to their new alignments. Hazel Park submitted their requests in conjunction with Battle Creek Middle School.
- Contingency and undesignated projects, what are those? Response: the contingency is for cost overruns on approved projects. The undesignated funds are for unanticipated projects or unforeseen conditions in conjunction with other work.
- Is the capital funding process moving from a two-year capital programming effort back to one year? Response: At the time the process moved to two years the District was anticipating the results of the FCA/EAA study so the decision was made to bridge this time by funding specific large projects through the bonding process. The process is now returning to a normal of one-year cycle.
- The marquee signage – why were those selected? Is this a proper focus for funds? Response: The focus was on signage which was old and in disrepair. Additionally SPPS does compete with other educational organizations so the District wants to ensure the environment is welcoming to families. CEAC deferred to schools’ choices on their deficiency list and rankings. The District wants to have schools be a presence and center in the community, to make them more visible. There is also a “civic” nature for the schools (serving as polling sites, etc.). The committee’s primary concern was to address the top three deficiencies identified by the sites and to stop “hiding” schools.
- A Board member expressed concern whether “marquees” were an item that would have the most direct, dramatic impact on student achievement and since that occurs inside the building how sites should prioritize that when they make recommendations for upgrades on infrastructure.

- Some background was provided for new board members on the process and the FCA/EAA which provides a basis for decisions on critical issues within schools. Schools cannot unprioritize those issues. It was also noted these items are funded from capital funds which can only be used for specific purposes. Having the FCA/EAA study supporting the process prevents inappropriate use.
- CEAC was asked, "Are schools asking for the right things"? Are there training issues within the schools in identifying the top priority projects? How would administration suggest additional leadership training be done in this area? What is being done to ensure when investment is made in equipment that there is a level of knowledge on how to use that equipment among staff? Response: Building administrators have specified the use of white boards in specific areas where staff are knowledgeable about their use.
- It was noted that if the District plans to serve students with the best of 21st century technology then the district is not spending enough on technology. There is a need to get to an adequate minimum in the district.
- The question on how to get the message to schools on the priorities which were not accepted was raised again. Response: CEAC discussed that issue at length. There were some very worthy proposals that did not get funded because there were not enough funds there to do so. Schools should be encouraged to resubmit meritorious projects which may not have been funded the following year. CEAC worked within parameters which focused on equity and additional information has been sought on many of these to ensure that equity. The Superintendent said there was simply not enough time or staff to notify all of the schools on this. The District will send information to the schools to explain priorities and each leader will use that information to assess their requests and why they may not have been funded.

MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved, seconded by Ms. Varro, that the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education approve the following capital expenditures:

Capital Bonds Available	\$15,000,000
• District-wide Project (Direct Digital Control [DDC])	1,000,000
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MOTION PASSED

Thanks were extended to all of the committee members and staff for the effort involved in bringing the recommendations forward.

C. American Indian Education Parent Committee Resolution of Concurrence Report

The committee acknowledged the continued efforts of the District Administration and the Board in working collaboratively with the American Indian Education Parent Advisory Committee. They stated the Resolution of Concurrence for the 2009-10 school year demonstrates the success of the continued dialogue in meeting the needs of American Indian students.

The parent committee expressed its continued support of the Indian Education Program which supports a citywide system of working with American Indian students even though they represent small numbers within the overall student numbers for SPPS. They also continue to support the American Indian Studies Program which exists to create a greater understanding and knowledge of the history of the indigenous peoples within America. The committee members then moved to specific recommendations in four major areas.

1. **American Indian Studies (AIS) Program**

Committee members stated the American Indian Studies School and Harding High School were both providing excellent support to their students. Committee members then moved on to discuss the issues at Battle Creek Middle School which had been brought to their attention by parents and students and made recommendations to address these.

- That Battle Creek Middle School (as the school where AIS is held) receive some professional development around American Indian culture and beliefs. It was recommended American Indian leaders in the community be utilized to train staff.
- The committee continued to express concern regarding the turnover of staff in American Indian Studies at Battle Creek. Consistency of staff would provide a better learning environment for the students.

2. **Follow-Up on Previous Administrative Agreements**

On-going areas of concern include: attendance, academic achievement, student suspension and inclusion of American Indian history, language, peoples and culture in District curriculum. They asked if programs designated to improve outcomes in these areas are in fact working. They stated the community is experiencing frustration over the recurrence of these issues. More focused and analyzed data was requested in order to work with the District to develop effective and viable solutions to these issues.

- Increasing Attendance

The committee stated that American Indian students who were absent 11 or more days continue to be the highest of all student groups. The committee requested that the District continue to monitor the Attendance/GPA letter and template to determine the impact of the strategy on American Indian attendance. In addition, an update on the District's work surrounding attendance and TIP/FTIP goals, especially as it pertains to American Indian students. They also asked what could be done to show the students they are valued.

- Increasing Academic Support

The 2009-11 Indian Education Strategic Plan is aligned with the District's Strategic Plan. The top priority for American Indian families continues to be increased academic achievement for American Indian students. The committee requested details on the impact of the Response to Intervention (RTI) system and the professional learning around cultural proficiency.

- Decreasing American Indian Suspension

The committee expressed on-going concern with the suspension rates of American Indian students. Based on these concerns the committee requested specific details on the implementation of the cultural proficiency training, the new *Rights and Responsibility Handbook* and the PBIS programs, particularly with regard to any accountability processes in place to ensure effective implementation. They also requested any available data that indicates these initiatives are moving in the right direction and details on how the District is monitoring if teachers are using the programs.

- Inclusion of American Indian History, Language, Peoples and Cultures in the District's Curriculum

Concern was expressed that the American Indian Curriculum is not being utilized in the classrooms. Due to this concern the committee requested an update and copy of the common required end-of-course assessments and continued awareness of professional development opportunities in Culturally Responsive Teaching and anchor lessons available to staff.

3. **Special Education Over-Identification**

The committee expressed concern about the level of students receiving special education services and particularly the number of male American Indian students (reflecting the

highest identification rate of all ethnic groups). Due to this concern the committee requested that an annual letter go out in the Fall from the Special Education Director to all special education staff and building principals that describes the role of Indian Education Social Workers in special education due process and the district expectations regarding involvement of Indian Education Social Workers in the initial pre-referral process on American Indian students within their building. Additionally, that the Special Education Director and Lead District Social Worker work with the Indian Education Supervisor to discuss and implement other recommendations within the consultant's report if they meet the needs of American Indian students. That the District provide continual monitoring of the data as the District implements recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Education Consultant Report. In addition, that professional development be provided for staff working with American Indian special education students on strategies and cultural differences that may help decrease the identification of American Indian students.

4. Inclusion in the Discussion as to District Reorganization and Upcoming System-wide Changes

The committee expressed a desire to work with the District to strengthen the depth of the Indian Education program across the district. They requested a discussion with the District on ways to expand programming for American Indian students across the district and ways Indian Education could help support this work. They also requested increased involvement of the Indian Education Supervisor in more district-wide systematic change discussions so that information can be brought back to the committee and community.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- The Superintendent extended thanks for the committee members taking time to come before the Board to discuss their concerns. She stated administration will take the concerns and respond to the committee at another meeting but stated she would touch briefly on the points brought up. She discussed ideas which have been under discussion to assist with attendance issues. She stated students and families do not understand the damage done by not attending school. The Communications Department will be focusing on how to improve parent education. The District focus in the last two years has been on how to reduce the number of suspensions by providing the *Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* for parents and students. Professional development has been implemented on how to deal with students to provide consistency across the system regarding suspensions. In the area of understanding of culture and heritage, this is a concern for all student groups. The District has provided professional development in cultural proficiency and diversity. 62% of staff have received the training at this point. In SY 10-11 the training will move into the schools. The question was raised whether the professional development meets the needs of the teachers and can it be improved upon. The training has been redesigned to make it more relevant to classroom teachers. Cultural differences is one of the biggest challenges in education because the majority of teachers are middle class white females. The District has tried to diversify staff but budget cuts required following the tenure laws which directly impacts this effort for more diversity. Mentoring is being explored further this year in conjunction with the St. Paul Schools Foundation. Efforts will be made to see how mentoring can be accomplished with American Indian students and this should make a difference. Test scores are a problem across the system; the bar has to be raised with greater expectations of the students and teachers through fidelity of implementation. The District has after-school programming but only a small number of students participate and take advantage of it. The ALC program has changed reading instruction to provide differing methods to work toward success in reading. There will also be a Saturday school opportunity to accelerate the learning process. Saturday school will provide up to 30 days of additional instruction to the students. These programs will be a mix of academics and recreation to keep the students engaged. The District will continue working with tutors in partnership with U of MN and with peer mentoring efforts. Parents need to help as well in getting their students to school and encouraging participation in ALC after school and weekend opportunities. The Department of Community Involvement has plans to provide

additional information to parents on how to help their students learn. Every student must be welcomed, respected as an individual and his or her cultural background respected.

- The Superintendent stated she and various Board members have had meetings with all high school principals and their primary staff on how they plan to improve rates of attendance, graduation and what is being done differently this year from previous years.
- The Board extended its thanks as well and indicated they are looking forward to the formal response from administration and further dialogue. They further stated they appreciated the two-step open process of parent committee presentation and administrative response.
- A Board member encouraged committee members and administration to move beyond the requests for information within the resolution and pursue a deeper response addressing the data, how issues will be addressed and what outcomes will result from those efforts. To move beyond data to outcomes.
- Comment was made on the Special Education issues. It was admitted over identification is a critical issues for many student groups. However, in many cases it is an attempt to get the extra support needed by child. Parents and staff need to try to get at whether the need is real or not and whether it is ignorance, misunderstanding, discrimination or if it is an attempt to solve a problem. Is it a good solution to meet a specific need?
- A committee member stated the resolutions are repetitive as are the answers coming back to address them from year to year. The plans talk about response to intervention and specifically how to implement for a certain groups of students. Cultural background is an asset to the students. Perhaps a better way to address intervention is to break it down to more specific groups of responses based on how it applies to that specific group. It would be good to see more specificity regarding how things will work for the American Indian student population.
- A Board member stated in order to make things work right on the important things which need to be done, the process should be done the same for every group. For example, not being in class has the same impact on any child from any group. The issue should be how to make the good ideas work and resources need to be found to make a difference. If the American Indian students are used as a "pilot" to ensure the ideas work, the ideas should then be rolled out to apply to everyone. The message may have to be addressed a little differently in order to get through to different groups but the basic ideas should apply across the board.
- A Board member stated it is time to shift from making a plan to delivering a solution and requested specifically: when can the parent committee expect updates as requested? How can arrangements be made to provide continued updates in the areas requested? The issue of staff not appreciating or utilizing resources the Indian Education Program offers needs to be addressed. Many of those arrangements were made by law and the materials were developed with the assistance of Federal dollars. Staff need to become fully knowledgeable about services available. There should be no situation, especially involving an American Indian student, where a student is reassigned without staff in the program or the parents being notified. The American Indian community knows when children are treated well and are respected all children do better. The cultural information is not just to benefit American Indian students but also to better review the course assessments of where the curriculum is offered in the district. 2010 would be the perfect time to do a curriculum review and a presentation in the classroom around American Indian values and history.
- Another Board member requested the American Indian committee continue to communicate with the Board throughout the year. Committee members were asked to state what is going well and what is not within the Indian Education Program. Positive comments were made about Harding, the American Indian Magnet, and Como. AIS is excellent, provides self-esteem and a good learning environment. What is being done right in these schools should be modeled in other schools.
- Concern was expressed about the format and timing of the AYP letter. The Superintendent stated the letter would be revised to provide better information to parents next year.
- How will the Hazel Park co-location impact Battle Creek and American Indian Studies? This might be the ideal opportunity to emphasize cultures and the culture within the schools as they come together.

- How can the transition from elementary to middle school be addressed further. The curriculum needs to be made more visible to parents. A better job needs to be done in putting resources out to all parents, teachers and students.
- AIS meets the specific needs of American Indian students and puts systems in place that work for the kids. There is a need in the schools to recognize when differentiation is needed that does not change the basic message but makes it more recognizable/useful to specific groups.
- There is a difference between inputs and outputs. The District needs to know if the efforts being made are working, have they made a difference in outcomes. Measures need to be looked at more frequently during the year. Recognize if it is or is not working, maintain, sustain and build on what is working.
- In the African American community there are discussions happening about external points needing to be addressed. They are finding there is a culture among young people that they do not want to be educated because that takes them out of their group or differentiates them. Does that attitude exist in the American Indian culture and what can be done to break through that attitude? Response: This is a challenge; it is a challenge in many neighborhoods and across many communities. There has to be a focus on test scores but what does success look like? It is not just test scores. Success is about being a contributor to the community. It is how to create leaders in communities and to recognize that different cultures address getting things done in different ways; that there is a different worldview. When the heart is there and it is about more than a piece of paper, the kids step up. There is a community/culture the kids have with each other where they offer support to each other. They have a sense of community of being united together. There needs to be more communication for kids with teachers and counselors.
- The Board Chair noted that the District needs to be aware that for American Indians education was not always a matter of personal preference. She provided extensive background on the "boarding school educational process" which was inflicted upon the Native American communities. Historically education, for Native Americans, was a process of losing their cultural identity. The challenge is for American Indians to define what it means to be educated and successful within their cultural context.
- On the issue of inclusion in the discussions, including the American Indian community at the table means bringing in some of that history and taking it into consideration in defining what success means.
- The comment was made that education needs to be such that it lets students come out being who they are meant to be.
- The vision of success in the past has been about a clash of worldviews, about individuals within the European American frame of reference. This is no longer relevant in this time of rapid change. The native worldview is much more holistic, much more inter-dependent. Leadership is about relationships and it is dynamic. The notion of top down is no longer valid so SPSS can change what success means for all students through taking on more of these worldviews. That is what is most exciting in this time.

MOTION: Ms. O'Connell moved the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education accept the American Indian Education Parent Committee Resolution of Concurrence with thanks. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kong-Thao.

Motion passed.

Thanks were extended to the committee for their work in bringing forward their resolution and the issues contained within it.

D. Standing Item: School & Program Changes
No report

E. Standing Item: Policy Update
The Policy Subcommittee will meet to look at suggestions for policy changes which are being brought forward in five areas along with development of procedures that reflect current policy.

F. Work Session

1. Schedule Remaining SY 2010-11 Board Meeting Dates

Proposed dates for the meetings from February through July 2011 were brought before the Board for their discussion/approval. The recommended dates are:

- Already Approved
 - January 4 Annual Meeting
 - January 11 Committee of the Board
 - January 18 Board of Education Meeting (Ex Team)
 - February 1 Committee of the Board
- Proposed
 - February 15 Board of Education Meeting (Ex Team)
 - March 1 Committee of the Board
 - March 15 Board of Education Meeting (Ex Team)
 - April 5 Committee of the Board
 - April 19 Board of Education Meeting (Ex Team)
 - May 3 Committee of the Board
 - (May 15 Celebration of Excellence)
 - May 17 Board of Education Meeting (Ex Team)
 - (May 24 Elementary Academic Awards)
 - June 7 – Special Board of Education Meeting (Non-Renewals) **
 - June 21 Board of Education Meeting (Ex Team)
 - June 28 Committee of the Board
 - July 19 Committee of the Board (Ex Team)
 - July 19 Board of Education Meeting

** Depending on graduation dates

MOTION: Ms. Street-Stewart moved the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education approve, pending a review for conflicts, the listed dates for meetings from February through July 2011. Motion seconded by Ms. Carroll.

Motion Passed.

A request was made that a conversation about dates for Board development and retreats be scheduled. This is to be placed on the September 14 COB agenda during the work session. The Superintendent indicated she would be bringing forward a plan from Teamworks that would involve times over the next three to four months.

III. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms Kong-Thao moved the meeting adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hardy.

Motion Passed

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Polsfuss
Assistant Clerk