



School Board Retreat Minutes

January 20, 2024, 9am-3pm

Puget Sound Skills Center, 18010 8th Ave S, Burien, WA 98148, Yormark Room

Director Alvarez called the meeting to order at 9:04am. Present: Directors Alvarez, Van, Hagos, Petrini, and Tidholm were present. Dr. Duran, Holly Ferguson, and Erinn Bennett from staff were present. John Welch and Sarita Siqueiros Thornburg from PSESD were present to facilitate.

Dir. Alvarez turned the meeting over to John Welch, facilitator.

John Welch described the four purposes of today's retreat: 1) team building, 2) board governance, 3) board-superintendent relationship & superintendent roles and responsibilities, and 4) board goal and future planning. He went over the agenda for the day.

Team Building: Sarita led the group through a team building exercise – Appreciative Interviews.

Board Governance & Meeting Execution: John Welch opened the conversation with the importance of Organizational Values/Board Member Personal Values. The guiding questions for the policy discussions include: What has been our experience operationalizing this policy? What am I wondering about? What have I observed? Any items that need to be further discussed will be put on the parking lot chart paper.

John named the Board of Directors Handbook as a guiding document/tool. John noted that the National School Board Association (NSBA) calls out vision, accountability, policy & board operations, general operations of the district, community leadership, relationships between directors and between superintendent and directors as key responsibilities of Boards.

Policy & Procedure 1005: John pointed out the key points of the policy and procedure. Directors noted the need to revisit policies if they are older. John noted that a policy review schedule could be developed. Holly indicated that with so many Highline policies, the Board would need to identify which are the ones the Board is particularly interested in reviewing. Directors reviewed the email protocol guidelines within the procedure and shared examples of how it has been operationalized. Directors discussed being aware of OPMA concerns if there is a quorum. Dr. Duran asked that Directors reach out to him or the Board President about specific constituent questions. Directors discussed the difference between using personal versus district phones. Directors discussed being aware they are always perceived as Board members when out in the community and to remember they may be seen as speaking for the Board of five. Directors discussed the length of emails and the need to share their thoughts. Directors clarified they can send an article to the full group, but the full group cannot reply all.

Policy 1220 – Board Officers & Duties of Board Members: John reviewed the key points of the policy. Directors discussed the role of the Board President as spokesperson of the board. Directors discussed the need to check in before responding to media questions. Directors discussed how the board president

responds to requests for a statement and when a response may or may not be given. Directors discussed the language in Policy 1005 about listening to the community in making their decisions. Directors discussed the Role of the Legislative Representative – and that the Board may need to update its policy to change their appointment to align with the director liaisons (added to parking lot). Directors discussed the time needed to prepare for Board meetings – it is significant.

Directors took a 5-minute break.

Policy 1400 – Meeting Conduct, Order of Business & Quorum: John reviewed the key points of the policy, the different types of meetings, and that meeting conduct is lightly guided by Robert's Rules of Order.

Policy 1420 – Proposed Agenda and Consent Agenda – John reviewed the key points of the policy. Holly discussed how items come to the board – typically introduction at one meeting and action at the next meeting. She shared how items get moved to the consent agenda. She shared the order of the board meeting items on the agenda. Directors discussed how the two-step process allows time for asking questions and deliberation. John discussed how a director would raise an item to be placed on a future agenda. Directors shared appreciation for the recent addition of introductory presentations by staff. Directors discussed the opportunity for School Board reports. Directors asked that the Communications department go back to organizing the information by director district area.

Directors asked for clarification on the meaning of the language at the bottom of page 2 of Policy 1400 about requesting that an item be added to the agenda. Directors discussed the need to give public notice of what is going to be discussed and the need for the year-at-a-glance to be clear.

Policy 1430 – Audience Participation. John went over the key points of the policy and procedure. Directors discussed walk in speakers and equitable access for speaking opportunities. Directors added discussing this policy to the parking lot. Holly shared that when signing up on the website, the information is available in other languages. Directors discussed adding upcoming Board meetings to Highline messaging. Staff to confirm the correct version is on the website.

Directors participated in a Story of My Name Activity during a working lunch starting at 12:01pm.

Policy & Procedure 4309 – Use of Social Media: John reviewed the key points of the policy and procedure. Directors discussed district social media pages and how personal pages may not be seen as private anymore. Directors discussed using social media to repost events.

Policy & Procedure 4312 – Complaints Concerning Staff or Programs: John reviewed the key points of the policy and procedure. Directors discussed with the Superintendent how to address the situation if there is an issue with a staff member. John pointed to the information on the website on how parents report a concern. Holly clarified there are two different complaint processes: 4312 is when a community member (can include parent) has a complaint about a staff or program member in the district. The Concern Process is focused on parents with concerns about a particular situation happening in a school. Sometimes the situation can go into either process.

The Relationship between the Board and Superintendent: John reviewed the key points of policy and procedure 1620. John discussed the difference between directors' informal and formal visits and when to go through the Office of the Superintendent. Directors discussed the difference between being at a school as a parent or a board member. Directors discussed letting each other know if they are visiting another director's area. Directors discussed the impact of when a Board member visits a school. Dr. Duran discussed his

formal and informal visits at schools. John reviewed actions to strengthen relationships and actions that aggravate relationships. Directors discussed what to do when questions come up during the board meetings. Dr. Duran asked that, when possible, questions be sent in advance so that staff is not surprised or put on the spot. He clarified that information can be shared between introduction and action. John reiterated the district's practice not to respond to all of the public comments in the board meeting. Directors discussed additional things that could aggravate the relationship.

Policy and Procedure 1630 – Superintendent Evaluation: John covered the key points of the policy and procedure. Directors discussed contract renewals. Staff to send the Superintendent's contract to Directors. Directors discussed that part of evaluation discussion should include how directors can support the superintendent.

Board Goal Discussion – Directors discussed identifying a goal for Jan. – June 2024. Directors discussed better communication with each other, timelines, and being transparent about who is responding to whom. Holly and Erinn committed to creating visuals/flow charts for this topic.

Board members brainstormed potential goals. The starred goals were named as moving forward to come before the Board for a vote at a future board meeting.

- ★ Build systems and understanding to support better communication with each other and constituents, including timelines, procedures for responding, and closing the loop
- ★ Reviewing/Using the WSSDA board self-assessment tool and working towards becoming a Board of Distinction
- Support listening to the needs of the community in curriculum reviews including Biology and K-12 Comprehensive Health
- Complete an analysis of equity of resources (e.g. sports uniforms)
- Evaluate the surveys being used in schools (SBIRT, HYS, Panorama) and share how they are supporting academic success
- ★ Have at least one community engagement by director district

Directors discussed having a March board retreat. Staff to send scheduling poll to determine availability.

Directors discussed professional development opportunities and the need to be aware of fiduciary responsibilities. Discussed being equitable between directors and to let people know so we can make sure there are enough funds. Directors were asked to share with the board president and superintendent if they are interested in attending a professional development opportunity. Congratulations was shared for Dir. Hagos being accepted into the WSSDA leadership program and she was asked to bring her learnings back to Board so they can learn alongside. Directors discussed being strategic about how many directors attend conferences.

The group shared one takeaway or aha moment each from the meeting. The meeting ended at 3:00pm.

President, Board of Directors

Secretary to the Board