

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625
Saint Paul, Minnesota**

**COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING
360 Colborne Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102**

**February 6, 2024
4:30 p.m.**

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m. by Vice Chair Ward.

2. ROLL CALL

Board of Education: U. Ward, H. Henderson, E. Valliant, C. Allen, J. Vue, C. Franco, Y. Carrillo
Superintendent Gothard

Staff: C. Long, Y. Vang, S. Schmidt de Carranza, S. Dahlke, J. Turner, S. Gray
Akyea, J. Danielson, H. Nistler, K. Morris, B. Schmidt, T. Parent,, N. Páez,
T. Sager, M. McHenry, K. Thao, L. Olson, M. Vincent, L. Corey, A. Speed,
K. Darwitz

Community: A. DeRosier

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA

MOTION: Director Ward moved approval of the Order of the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Henderson. It passed by acclaim.

4. AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (FY24) STATUS UPDATE

The presentation detailed ARP background information, a review of SPPS Achieves initiatives and ARP strategies by focus area, the ARP lifecycle and details of each phase. The FY24 preliminary spending to date was shared, as well as the process for unspent funds. Web updates in January 2024 were shared, including information on the 2022-23 Year in Review, and a link to the updated ARP spending and impact summary online.

Within the Community Partners Status Update portion of the presentation, the background of ARP and community partnerships was reviewed, with \$7 million allocated to help provide services to students and families most impacted by distance learning, and who are experiencing gaps in opportunities and outcomes by:

- Working with community partners to provide academic, social emotional and family support
- Addressing pre- and post-pandemic unfinished learning
- Providing students and families with community resources

Details of the RFP process and results were also shared. Year 1 Highlights for SY22-23 and Summer 2023 were presented, with the ARP priority areas of:

- Mental health, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and support for student support in schools (in-school)
- Flipside for middle school students (out of school time)
- Family Support (in-school and school aligned)
- Academic Support (in-school)
- Community-based youth programs not aligned with priority areas but serve SPPS students (out of school time)

Further information included information on the 113 community partners, activities, and opportunities for students and families across Saint Paul, data by community partners, data by priority area, data by student participants, and data by grade level.

Year 2 highlights for SY23-24 and Summer 2024 was also shared, including data by community partners, and ARP community partners. Community partners site visit highlights were also detailed, including COMPAS with the priority area of Mental Health and SEL Support, Speak Your Truth with the priority area of Mental Health and SEL Support, Women's Initiative for Self-Empowerment with the priority area of Flipside, Coalition of Asian American Leaders with the priority area of Family Support, Youth and Family Circle with the priority area of Family Support, Athletes Committed to Educating Students with the priority area of Academic Support, Proceed with the priority area of Community-based Support, and The JK Movement with the priority area of Community-based Support.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- For FY24, what is the largest portion of spending occurring this year, and what are the variables where there may be fluctuation? What is the biggest risk? Response: The largest portion is FTEs, as well as construction projects. In terms of risks, there are issues in underspending in supplemental pay and contracts, but we meet with our Purchasing team and monitoring the accounting codes where there is underspending in the past. We do not believe there is a risk of overspending in any of the accounts.
- Director Franco noted questions about the additional \$60M that was spent compared to last year, and requested an overview of the additional spending in this budget. Response: A large portion is construction, and there are also more partnerships. We are also more fully staffed than in the past – with staffing issues over the past few years.
- Director Allen requested information on the “real time allocations” noted in the presentation, and how often the amounts are monitored. Response: We are meeting and pulling the data on a weekly basis, and we are also meeting with Finance with daily interactions. There is also an accountant assigned to this work.
- Director Vue requested information on what we have learned about safely reopening schools. Response: There are summative assessments and REA will be working on those the next few months to formally evaluate the objectives. The focus on safely reopening schools was focused on the physical safety, including masks, PPE, screens, social distancing equipment, additional staff, and physical items, such as HVAC equipment, buses, custodial time. Within SEL, we are still learning about the impacts, especially within partnerships, and the evaluation hasn't been completed yet. Director Vue also requested information on moments of revelation in receiving

these funds. It was noted that it was difficult to spend that large amount of money in a short amount of time, with many constraints. It was also difficult to spend money on staffing, and is difficult to give up that investment.

- Director Franco requested information on promising data points or strategies from this work. Response: The credit recovery work is promising, and the Alternative Learning team has done an exceptional job in strategizing innovative ways of offering credit recovery sooner for students. The internship certification work has also been promising and students have been able to earn \$100,000 in additional stipends, and earn resume building industry credentials. The WINN work has also been promising, and others also specific to extra curricular opportunities.
- What was the work with Ramsey County Sherriff's Office? Response: It was work with restorative circles, including with our Karen families. The Office was a fiscal and subcontractor, with the Ramsey County Intervention Team, to provide circles for the Karen community.
- Is there a list to visualize the 39 partners? Response: Yes, there is and that information can be sent, and is also available in the August 2022 Regular Meeting BoardBook.
- Director Henderson noted her appreciation for the layering of supports, and requested details on the process for partners to matching programs with school communities. Response: It was based on a matching process, and needs assessment, as well as a survey of principals. Based on the applicant, we determined what they'd be willing to provide, their capacity, and with the Office of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships, they were also matches based on their location, ages serves, and needs of the school. We also reached out to them to see if they had additional capacity to serve additional areas, if a certain area seemed to be missing services.
- Were there any needs that school communities were unable to find a partner to match? Response: Last school year, there was a difficult time in matching secondary schools with supports; there were agencies, but the agencies were having a difficult time finding direct service staff, so we asked them to problem-solve, and to leverage their supports.
- How often are monitors out at sites and a request for the specific program-level data collected through the monitoring process? Response: Initially the monitors were out more infrequently, and as we learned and gained capacity, they are at sites more frequently now – every day they are at a site, and each monitor is assigned to 14 agencies. They monitor for attendance, activities, and location, and if they are completing the activities as stated in the contract. This work is about building relationships with our partners, and many photos have been taken of students and our community partners doing this work together. In the future, we have learned that monitors need to be embedded with community partners right away.

5. FY24 and FY25 BUDGET UPDATE

This presentation including details on the SY23-24 PreK-12 enrollment update, a FY25 budget update including:

- For FY24, SPPS is serving roughly 450 more students than the projected enrollment used for the SY23-24 budget. This equates to roughly \$4.2 million more in revenue than budgeted.
- In addition to this, along with other updated information since last fall, the updated reduction target, or shortfall, for FY25 continues to fluctuate.

Information was also shared on the FY25 deficit of -\$107.7M.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Carrillo noted a question about other changes that could happen between now and June 3 in terms of the budgeted figures. Response: The compensatory figures will be monitored, as well as enrollment figures as that sets the trajectory for the next school year.
- Another note was that 80% of expenditures are tied directly to employment contracts, and we are working with groups currently, and there are certain parameters for those contracts, and if that would change, the budget figures would also be impacted.
- Director Allen requested further details on the amount of the \$107M that is tied to FTEs as opposed to dollars targets for one-time spending. Response: More information can be provided, but it is about 80%; we know \$25M is in non-payroll expenses, such as contracted services, supplies, capital and equipment. We will look into the coding for salary and benefits as well.
- What is the timeline for determining the \$107M and when can we expect more details? Response: Allocations will be sent to schools mid-March to end-March, and we are working through our Start, Stop, Sustain models.
- Do we have a projection for next year's enrollment? Response: We do have a projection, with a note that average daily attendance drives the budget figures. Dr. Gray Akyea noted that the projected enrollment can be provided, and has been finalized at the district level. She also noted that the numbers do not include PreK, as that is a function of programming choice. In terms of enrollment, it does appear to be stabilizing. Further information will be provided to the Board.
- Director Franco requested details on the communication structure to sites and programs about allocations and when they can expect to receive them. Response: The timeline was shared at the Superintendent's Districtwide Administrators Meeting about the March timeframe. Last year, allocations were sent out March 24th, and we hope have them out sooner this year.

6. POLICY UPDATE | POLICY 516.00 STUDENTS: MEDICATIONS/MEDICAL PROCEDURES AND POLICY 533.00 WELLNESS

POLICY 516.00 STUDENTS: MEDICATIONS/MEDICAL PROCEDURES

Details were shared on the rationale for the proposed amendments to this policy, including:

- Policy was last updated five years ago (2019)
- We are always striving to remove health barriers to learning, remove barriers for families, and have safe and efficient processes in place when it comes to administering medications and medical procedures.
- When updating our processes there was a need to review and update the policy.

A link to the proposed changes was included in the presentations. Language that is proposed to be removed was reviewed, as well as proposed language to be added to the policy.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- There are some stimulant medications for students with ADHD, that may fall under controlled substances. How will staff handle those? Response: We have procedures where medications such as these are counted, recorded, and double counted weekly with a second staff member counting them to check. They are also stored under two locks, in the health office and in a locked cabinet or drawer – not a portable locker.
- Schools do not stock Tylenol or ibuprofen? Response: We do not – other districts handle it differently. Historically, we have not stocked these medications, due to cost, as well as we do not want to get into the practice of administering medications without parental involvement. If there is a chronic need, parents may supply the medications to the school.

- Could a parent decide to provide the school with a bottle of pain reliever for their child?
Response: Yes, if parents provide the medication, and there is a parental signature and authorization. We also need to define parameters to distribute the medications, and often times there is a phone call to give permission – if a student asks in the morning, we want to be sure the medication has not already been given. Sometimes secondary students can identify when they need the medication and there is not a call home. We do chart all actions, and there is proper consent in place for parents and families.
- Overall, the Board approved moving this item to the three-reading process at the following Regular Meeting.

POLICY 533.00 WELLNESS

Details were shared on the rationale for the proposed amendments to this policy, including:

- Policy was last updated seven years ago (2017)
- Proposed changes to the policy are mostly driven by the changes made to the USDA National School Lunch Nutrition Programs
- Remove language around unsupported positions

A link to the proposed changes was included in the presentations. Language that is proposed to be removed was reviewed, as well as proposed language to be added to the policy.

The proposed policy updates were also included in BoardBook.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Henderson requested details on the streamlining and deletion of lines in the policy.
Response: Those items are not a requirement, and many times, there are not staff allocated to those roles. For some of the items, they may move to practice and procedure, instead of policy.
- At some point, was staff allocated to perform those responsibilities? Response: MDE has wellness requirements and a checklist of wellness policy items. When it first began, most districts wanted to include all items to implement. Not all items are required on the checklist though, they are great recommendations. It is up to each district to determine which to effectively implement, and which recommendations are for educational practice, which are part of the curriculum, and therefore, do not need to be defined in policy. We decided to pare it down to what is manageable in policy.
- Why is recess only encouraged in middle school, and not required like it is in elementary school?
Response: It is a recommendation, and not a curriculum requirement.
- What does “appealing food” mean in the policy, and how is that determined? Response: As this policy moves forward, we will invite our Director of Nutrition Services to further define this. Her staff regularly meets on site visits with students, taste testing, and ensures the recipes and ingredients taste like they want them to taste. Director Ward noted a few years ago, there was an appeal to the federal government to switch to white rice, though brown rice was the federal recommendation, due to cultural relevance.
- Further information was requested on the proposed deleted line about the certified and licensed staff, and that is due to the job description requirements, and it is not required in policy.
- Staff also provided details on participating activities, including the blender bike, bike fleets, physical activities and food awareness and food preparation.
- Director Valliant requested information on the items that are encouraged, but not required, and ways for schools to track where or how much is related to the wellness plan in order to monitor.

Site wellness teams were discussed. Director Vue noted that the Policy Work Group may want to work through the proposed monitoring process.

- Director Carrillo noted questions around non-food celebrations, but then later the policy notes promoting activities like menu planning. It seems like removing food from celebrations is culturally irrelevant, instead of relevant. Food is a celebration. Response: As we move to the three-readings, we can discuss what it means to be culturally relevant and care for the health of students and staff. The policy can be modified during the three-reading process to include this.
 - It was also noted that the intent is not for families to not be able to bring in food to celebrate, but more so for staff who may have provided food as a reward, such as a pizza party. This policy would encourage alternatives to food as part of celebrations, and we will look into the language further.
- It was noted that many middle schools may not have access to the infrastructure for recess.
- Director Franco also noted that we need to be intentional in offering the district spaces to the community and opening our public infrastructure, outdoor fields, indoor courts, and leverage the current resources and positions with folks in buildings to promote healthy lifestyles and physical activity outside of the school day.
- Overall, the Board agreed to move this proposed policy update to the three-reading process, and to include staff from the Department of Schools and Learning, as well as Nutritional Services to provide additional guidance and information.

7. 2023 LATINO CONSENT DECREE PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

The presentation included the background and history of the Latino Consent Decree (LCD) Program, the LCD Parent Advisory Council, the LCD PAC Annual Report, and the 2021-2022 Recommendations Update.

The Latino Consent Decree (LCD) is a legally binding court order (consent decree) that the Saint Paul Public Schools entered into as part of the settlement of the federal court case of Garcia et al. vs. Independent School District 625. The final stipulation for this case (1984) details the full range of responsibilities that the Saint Paul Public Schools have agreed to regarding the education of Latino students with limited English proficiency. Information and data of LCD students in SPPS were also shared, including 5,026 LCD students, with 3,359 with the home language of Spanish, and 2,439 LCD/EL students. The organizational chart of the LCD Program was also shared.

The general purpose of the Latino Consent Decree (LCD), Parent Advisory Council (PAC), is to serve as a forum for the expression of concerns and recommendations of Latino parents, representatives of community-based organizations, and public school personnel about the education of Spanish-speaking students in SPPS.

The Annual Report was also shared, including the full version in BoardBook. The Annual Report is an annual document of the Latino Consent Decree Parent Advisory Council (LCD PAC) and the Latino Consent Decree (LCD) Program. In this year's report, the members of the LCD PAC focused on the following:

- Latino/Hispanic Culture
- Update on the 2021-2022 LCD PAC Recommendations

Further details within each area were also shared. Within Latino/Hispanic Culture, details included information from the LCD Stipulation include that Latino children are to “receive (2)planned instruction given with sensitivity to and appreciation for the culture and heritage of Latino children and receive designed instruction given in the history, culture, and legacy of Latino children; and (3)planned instruction given in the history, culture and heritage of Latino children and the history, and culture of the United States.”

Accomplishments, as well as challenges were also discussed. Next steps including collaboration and opportunities were also shared. Within the Update on the 2021-2022 LCD PAC Recommendations portion, details were provided on the recommendations, the status, and evidence, as well as information and photos from both the LCD Senior Recognition and LCD Parent Engagement.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Vue noted there has been a noticeable shift from systems support recommendations to a more educational focus. Why was the shift meaningful to the advisory council? Response: One of the main reasons was the LCD flag in the student data system, but there was not information for each student attached to that. Teachers are now able to see a better background of each student. One of the biggest impacts this year was also the assessment that was done in Spanish. In talking about culture, that is very important for students, and it's important for schools to recognize them. It's also important for students to value the diversity in their schools, and respect other cultures as well.
- In talking about Latino students, there are so many different countries that comprise Latino culture, and what supports are available for teachers? Response: A LCD teacher provided her personal experience, in that it's important to get to know each student, their family's home country, and how to best support them. It is important to involve all students in different cultural activities, including presentations of home countries. It's also very important to continue hiring LCD teachers, as well as ESL teachers, and to support parents and families as well. There are also workshops each month, where teachers discuss the diversity of the District and as one collective community. This is another rationale for the curriculum review, and to expand it to K-12 – the Hispanic culture is vast, and many students represent other countries, and we want to be inclusive, and culture varies from country and region.
- Director Carrillo requested information on the timeline and process to develop the curriculum and how to present the recommendations. Response: The timeline is 90 days in which the advisory council will then seek a response from the District and Board of Education. There are teams responsible for this work, and they will start once this is approved by the Board.
- Director Franco requested information on the delay in progress to the curriculum review. Response: It began in 2014, with social studies, and we wanted to develop a curriculum map similar to the American Indian map, and identify where and what students are learning according to the standards. In that time, many folks left the district, and many things happened, and the work stopped, and we want to revive it for our students, parents, and families. It was also difficult for families to answer "what is Latino culture and what it means to be Latino" because many families are asked about their home country, and it may vary. We were not able to express Latino culture. Information was also shared on the LCD Parent Academy.
- Director Franco noted that it sounds like we are in a better place than in 2015 to move this work forward, and to use as a model for how we expand for other cultures and programs throughout the district.
- Information and experiences were also shared in response to the question about what does support in cultural identity look like for middle and high school students?
- Chief Turner noted her history and experiences in being a part of the LCD presentations, and the continued collaboration that has grown between the District and families. She thanked the parents and families, as well as the Office of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships, especially Mr. Matamoros and Ms. Reyes.

- Board members thanked members of the council. Director Vue encouraged them to keep up the good work, and continuing to tell the stories from Parent Academy. It was also noted that not only LCD students are seeing the benefits of LCD teachers – but all students benefit from the instruction as well. Director Valliant thanked the members for their work and advocating for their students. Director Ward also thanked the council for their work to build a better SPPS to serve out students. Members of the council also thanked the Board for the opportunity.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Director Ward moved to adjourn the meeting. Director Carrillo seconded the motion. It passed by acclaim.

The meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

9. WORK SESSION

The Board then conducted a work session regarding the discussion of Board-proposed FY25 budget parameters.

For clarity and to facilitate research, these minutes reflect the order of the original Agenda and not necessarily the time during the meeting the items were discussed.

Prepared and submitted by:

Sarah Dahlke, Assistant Clerk, St. Paul Public Schools Board of Education