

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

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
360 Colborne Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102, and**

Available Streaming Online at [www.spps.org/boe](http://www.spps.org/boe) and Saint Paul Cable Channel 16

**January 21, 2025  
5:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by Halla Henderson, Chair.

**2. ROLL CALL**

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

C. Long, General Counsel; S. Dahlke, Assistant Clerk

**3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA**

**MOTION: Director Henderson moved approval of the order of the main agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Vue.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Franco	Yes
Director Valliant	Yes

**4. RECOGNITIONS**

Recognitions were scheduled for this meeting, however, due to the cold weather closure staff were unable to attend the meeting, and the recognitions will be moved to the February meeting.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

- |                                       |                   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <b><u>Megan Jaunich</u></b>        | Cell Phone Policy |
| 2. <b><u>Jonathan Oppenheimer</u></b> | Cell Phone Policy |
| 3. <b><u>Stephanie Harris</u></b>     | Cell Phone Policy |

- |                                    |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 4. <u>Kira Appelhans</u>           | Global Arts Plus - Upper          |
| 5. <u>Jennifer Mulligan-Locket</u> | Global Arts Plus - Upper          |
| 6. <u>Magdalene Welp</u>           | Global Arts Plus - Upper          |
| 7. <u>Mara Solis</u>               | Advocating for Immigrant Families |
| 8. <u>Casey Ulrich</u>             | Advocating for Immigrant Families |
| 9. <u>Cynthia Sarver</u>           | Advocating for Immigrant Families |
| 10. <u>Eric Khouchaleun</u>        | Txuj Ci                           |
| 11. <u>Kyle Mulligan-Locket</u>    | Leadership                        |
| 12. <u>Mee Moua</u>                | Txuj Ci                           |
| 13. <u>Ber Yang</u>                | Txuj Ci                           |
| 14. <u>Ethan Yang</u>              | Txuj Ci                           |

**6. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Director Henderson moved approval of the Order of the Consent Agenda with no items pulled for separate consideration. The motion was seconded by Director Vue.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Franco	Yes
Director Valliant	Yes

**7. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

- A. Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of December 16, 2024
- B. Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of December 17, 2024
- C. Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of December 18, 2024
- D. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of December 19, 2024
- E. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Board of Education of January 7, 2025

**MOTION:** Director Henderson moved approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of December 16, 2024; Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of December 17, 2024; Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Education of December 18, 2024; Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of December 19, 2024; and Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Board of Education of January 7, 2025. The motion was seconded by Director Valliant.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Franco	Yes
Director Valliant	Yes

## 8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. Minutes of the Committee of the Board Meeting of January 7, 2025

At the Committee of the Board Meeting on January 7, 2025, Superintendent Thein thanked the school board members for their new year of service and leadership following the Annual Meeting. He also noted the upcoming Association of Metropolitan School District meeting on education legislation and invited all board members to attend. He went on to provide a brief report on his meetings over Winter Break with our incoming superintendent, Dr. Stacie Stanley and her excitement to join SPPS and to do what's best for our students.

The first presentation was the First Reading Discussion of Board Policy 550: Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices. Within the discussion, board members requested clarification on the end date for surveys and thanked the team for their work on this topic with high interest from our stakeholders and community. Within the reflection point of the data and implications for this policy, the Board noted the importance of community feedback that was taken into consideration, construction of the survey, concerns around discipline related to this policy, importance of consistency throughout schools and programs, data of responses from students, the distraction of certain apps to students, support for families and capacity of the front office in fielding communications from families to students, continued conversations on iPad usage, and conversation about the options for implementation at 6-8 sites verses 9-12. The Board also discussed monitoring and progress towards a goal within this policy.

Within the reflection about the community feedback shared and the language as written in section 3.A.1, the Board noted questions about the search of a device and reasonable use in the scope of circumstances, support for students who may help their parents and families with translation and a mechanism for them within this new policy, support for positive incentives, questions about emergency plans and situations, and support for families to communicate with their student their district iPad.

The next presentation focused on the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds and the close-out report. The Board and Administration thanked staff for their work on these initiatives, which were in addition to their regular duties. The Board also noted questions about the most effective use of the dollars in mitigating learning loss, which included credit recovery, WINN, and Earn As You Learn. Language supports for families were also critical. The effects within our district practices as a result of these funds were also noted. The cross-functionality of initiatives was also discussed and the importance of de-siloing. More details were requested on the allocation of funds, as well as further information on the additional funds from the state and grants. It was confirmed that SPPS did follow all guidelines of the Minnesota Department of Education in the spending-down of these funds. The Board also requested information on the extent to which we accomplished the priorities listed within the presentation, and that this report signals the turning of the page to a new chapter for SPPS in terms of returning and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**MOTION: Director Ward moved to accept the report on the January 7, 2025 Committee of the Board meeting and approve the recommended motions and minutes of that meeting as published. The motion was seconded by Director Carrillo.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes

Director Allen	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Franco	Yes
Director Valliant	Yes

**9. FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE**

A. Board of Education Meetings (5:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted)

- January 7, 2025 (Annual Organizational Meeting at 4:00pm)
- January 21, 2025
- February 18, 2025
- March 18, 2025
- April 22, 2025
- May 20, 2025
- June 10, 2025 (Special re: Non-Renewals at 4:00pm)
- June 17, 2025
- July 15, 2025
- August 19, 2025
- September 23, 2025
- October 21, 2025
- November 18, 2025
- December 16, 2025

B. Committee of the Board Meetings (4:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted)

- January 7, 2025 (Annual Organizational Meeting at 4:00pm)
- February 4, 2025
- March 4, 2025
- April 8, 2025
- May 6, 2025
- June 10, 2025 • August 6, 2025 – Wednesday (Primary Election)
- September 9, 2025
- October 7, 2025
- November 5, 2025 – Wednesday (Election Day)
- December 2, 2025

**10. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Superintendent Their's remarks included the recent Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and the great significance and history of this day. It was first celebrated in 1986 and is a commemoration of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday to honor his life and legacy and encourage all to volunteer to improve their communities. We celebrate what would have been his 96th birthday, and he continues to inspire us to stand up and speak out against injustice.

He also noted that at the annual MLK Day Celebration at the Ordway one of the speakers is our incoming superintendent, Dr. Stacie Stanley. She spoke about the role that education can play in transforming lives, and we need to ensure that we are opening doors for each and every one of our students.

He also noted events in Washington D.C, and assured the Board, our students, families, and community that SPPS respects and affirms and welcomes all students, staff, and families as a public school district and our policies and practices for all to learn a fair and equitable public education in a respectful environment, where we are all valued and contribute to success in our schools and in life. He then quoted Martin Luther King, Jr. that we “must walk on in the days ahead with audacious faith in the future.” Our students - all of them - are that future.

## 11. AGENDA ITEMS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION

### 1. Consent Agenda

**MOTION: Director Henderson moved approval of all items within the consent agenda withholding no items for separate consideration. Director Franco seconded the motion.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Franco	Yes
Director Valliant	Yes

#### 1. Gifts

**BF 34117** Highland Park Senior High Gift Acceptance of \$7,500

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to accept the donation of \$7,500 from Scott Milburn for continued International Baccalaureate book needs and that the Superintendent send a letter of appreciation to Scott Milburn.

**BF 34118** Acceptance of Donation to Highland Park Middle School

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to accept the donated gift of \$7,500 to Highland Park Middle School.

#### 2. Grants

**BF 34119** Request for Permission to Accept Grants from the Blaze Credit Union Foundation

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent (designee) to accept funds from Blaze Credit Union Foundation to support innovative classroom projects and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 34120** Request for Permission to Submit to KidsGardening’s Youth Garden Grant

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to accept a grant from KidsGardening; to support the Frost Lake Elementary grant project; to accept funds; and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 34121** Request for Permission to Submit a Grant to the Protolabs Foundation's STEM Grant

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to accept a grant from The Protolabs Foundation; to accept funds; and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 34122** Request for Permission to Submit Applications to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' No Child Left Inside Grant

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to submit grants to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' No Child Left Inside grant program; to accept funds; and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 34123** Request for Permission to Submit to the Minnesota Department of Education's Grow Your Own Pathway for Secondary Students Grant

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to submit a grant to the Minnesota Department of Education's Grow Your Own Pathway for Secondary Students Grant program; to accept funds; and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

**BF 34124** Request for Permission to Submit to the Minnesota Department of Education's Grow Your Own Pathway for Adults Grant

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to submit a grant to the Minnesota Department of Education's Grow Your Own Pathway for Adults Grant program; to accept funds; and to implement the project as specified in the award documents.

3. Contracts

**BF 34125** Request to Enter Contract with BSCS Science Learning for Middle School Science Curriculum and Professional Development

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to approve the contract with BSCS Science Learning for \$213,320, funded through the 3M OpenSciEd grant.

**BF 34125-1** Request to Sign the Contract with Give Back Minnesota

That the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent (designee) to sign the contract between Saint Paul Public Schools and Give Back.

**BF 34126** Contract Amendment #1 for Intertek-PSI on the Bruce Vento New Construction project (Project # 1020-22-01)

That the Board of Education authorize award of Amendment #1 for Intertek-PSI in the amount of \$19,181 for the Bruce Vento Elementary – New Construction project (Project # 1020-22-01).

**BF 34127** Procure Technologies Contract Amendment #2

That the Board of Education authorize award of Amendment #2 for Procure Technologies in the amount of \$4,125.

**BF 34128** Contract Amendment #8 for Cuningham Group Architects the Bruce Vento New Construction project (Project # 1020-22-01)

That the Board of Education authorize award of Amendment #8 for Cuningham Group Architects in the amount of \$7,400 for the Bruce Vento Elementary – New Construction project (Project # 1020- 22-01).

4. Agreements

**BF 34129** Memorandum of Understanding between Saint Paul Public Schools and Great River Greening

That the Board of Education authorize the Memorandum of Understanding between Saint Paul Public Schools and Great River Greening to expand and enhance the tree canopy at select SPPS Schools and support SPPS schools in providing environmental education and engagement.

**BF 34130** Request for Permission to Participate in Professional Agreement with Metropolitan State University

That the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to enter into a Student Agreement with Metropolitan State University effective May 7, 2025, and continue through May 10, 2030, unless written notice to terminate this Agreement is given to the other party by April 1 of the preceding year

**BF 34131** Request for Permission to Participate in Professional Agreement with Pensacola State University

That the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent to enter into an Agreement with Pensacola State University effective February 1, 2025, and continue through February 1, 2030, unless written notice to terminate this Agreement is given to the other party by April 1 of the preceding year.

5. Administrative Items

**BF 34132** Monthly Operating Authority

That the Board of Education approve and ratify the following checks and electronic transfers for the period November 1, 2024- November 30, 2024

(a) General Account	#779683-780599	\$86,934,525.53
	#0011197-0011233	
	#7005387-7005413	
	#0011466-0011649	
(b) Construction Payments	- 0 -	\$6,921,522.78
(c) Debt Service	- 0 -	<u>0.00</u>
		\$93,856,048.31

Included in the above disbursements are two payrolls in the amount of \$43,903,588.33 and overtime of \$218,964.17 or 0.50% of payroll.

(d) Collateral Changes

Released: None

Additions: None

That the Board of Education further authorize payment of properly certified cash disbursements including payrolls, overtime schedules, compensation claims, and claims under the Worker's Compensation Law falling within the period ending May 31, 2025

**BF 34133** Recommendations for Exclusion of Students Non-Compliant with Minnesota Statute 121A.15 Health Standards: Immunizations

That the Board of Education exclude noncompliant student(s) from school(s) effective January 21, 2025 should they not comply with Minnesota State Health Standards for Immunizations on or before this date

**Human Resources Transactions**

**BF 34134** Transactions for December 1 – December 31, 2024

**BF 34135** Dedication of Easement for Right-of-Way Purposes

That the Board of Education authorize Saint Paul Public Schools to grant a perpetual non-exclusive easement for public right-of-way purposes to the City of Saint Paul at 543 Front Avenue.

**BF 34136** Phase Gate Approval of Plumbing Plus project at Wheelock Early Learning Center, Eastern Heights Elementary, L'Etoile du Nord Upper, Groveland Elementary, Hubbs Center, Focus Beyond, John A. Johnson, Griffin Stadium, Dayton's Bluff, Highwood Hills, and Student Placement Center (Project # 0551- 23-01): Gate #5.2 – Project Final Fiscal Close-out

That the Board of Education accept the report provided for Plumbing Plus project at Wheelock Early Learning Center, Eastern Heights Elementary, L'Etoile du Nord Upper, Groveland Elementary, Hubbs Center, Focus Beyond, John A. Johnson, Griffin Stadium, Dayton's Bluff, Highwood Hills, and Student Placement Center project (Project # 0551-23-01) at Phase Gate Check #5.2 – Project Final Fiscal Close-out.

**BF 34137** Phase Gate Approval of the Multi-site Boiler Replacement at Battle Creek Middle School and Hazel Park Preparatory Academy (Project # 0575-25-01): Gate #3 – Project Budget

That the Board of Education approve the Multi-site Boiler Replacement at Battle Creek Middle School and Hazel Park Preparatory Academy (Project # 0575-25-01) at Phase Gate Check #3 – Project Budget; setting the final project budget at \$1,900,000 and indicating direction to proceed with construction bidding.

**BF 34138** Phase Gate Approval of the Focus Beyond Playground Replacement project (Project # 2003-22-01): Gate #5.2 – Project Final Fiscal Close-out

That the Board of Education accept the report provided for Focus Beyond Playground Replacement project (Project # 2003-22-01) at Phase Gate Check #5.2 – Project Final Fiscal Close-out.

## 6. Bids

**BF 34139** Furniture Award for the Highland Park Middle School Entry Addition and Renovation Project (Project #3081-23-01)

That the Board of Education authorize award of cafeteria tables for the Highland Park Middle School Entry Addition and Renovation Project (Project #3081-23-01) to Innovative Office Solutions, LLC for a lump sum base bid of \$198,659.

**BF 34140** Phase Gate Approval of the FY24 Paving Program at LEAP at John A. Johnson and Groveland Elementary (Project # 0800-24-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of concrete and paving at LEAP at John A. Johnson for the FY24 Paving Program (Project # 0800-24-01) to Bituminous Roadways, Inc for a lump sum base bid of \$427,090.51.

**BF 34141** Phase Gate Approval of the FY25 Flooring Replacement Program at Como Park Elementary, Randolph Heights Elementary, Humboldt High School, Farnsworth Aerospace Upper Campus, and Maxfield Elementary (Project # 0225-25-01): Gate #4 - Contract Award

That the Board of Education approve the award of flooring for the FY25 Flooring Replacement Program at Como Park Elementary, Randolph Heights Elementary, and Humboldt High School project (Project # 0225-25-01) to H2I Group for a lump sum base bid of \$262,385.

## 7. Change Orders

**ITEMS PULLED FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION - None**

### **FURTHER AGENDA ITEMS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION**

#### 1. B.I.G.G.: Board Initiated Goals Governance - Goals Adoption

Vice Chair Ward then led the presentation on B.I.G.G.: Board Initiated Goals Governance - Goals Adoption. Information included the process for gathering and interpreting feedback and consistent themes in the data. From there, preliminary goals were presented in these categories:

- Student Outcomes Goals
  - Reading Proficiency
    - The percentage of SPPS students proficient in reading will increase from 34% in 2024 to 40% by 2029 while the percentage of SPPS students learning English as a second language who are proficient will increase from 7% in 2024 to 15% by 2029 as measured by the Minnesota Comprehensive Reading Assessments.
  - Mathematics Proficiency



The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

### **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- The Board discussed the responses to the surveys around Civics, which speaks to the culture and language and heritage of our community. All ethnic groups would have similar regards for Civics and related to their culture. Civics is affirming language and beliefs, and the community wants the Board to prioritize this area. Director Valliant disagreed, and while learning about the Constitution and Civics at an early age, a lot of students also expressed that they want to know how government works and how to make change. She believes Civics is important. Director Carrillo noted the value of Civics, but it is not only about students understanding the Constitution, but to represent themselves and vote, with access to elected officials, and for students to critically think of information and the world around them. It's also about students learning to discern the information in the news and public commentary on the internet, TV, and other news sources. Director Allen noted that in looking at the goals for Civics from 84% to 90%, it doesn't make sense to increase what students and families already have, and it seems like we're doing well at 84%, and she wonders if we should reanalyze that goal and look more towards broadening the conversation around Civics. She believes students want to learn how to organize and engage in the civic process.
  - Director Ward noted that he is open to changing the paraphrasing on these goals, and in conversations, the goals need to be measured and in goal format for a shared understanding of changes. Director Allen noted that the formulation of goals is complicated, and these preliminary goals will work, but the community will also tell us more about them.
  - Director Henderson noted there could be more discussion on the Civics aspect and context for community through engagement sessions and thought partnerships and workshop around this topic.
  - Director Valliant noted that she heard the desire for critical thinking skills, and that they need to be embedded into all subjects. This should not be under one subject area.
  - Director Franco noted the continued monitored growth and expectation for FAST testing and other components to demonstrate growth.
  - Director Ward noted that the goals are meant to be difficult, but achievable, and we may hear that the goals need to be increased, but based on conversations thus far, the workgroup tried to determine goals that would be ambitious, but possible.
- Director Carrillo noted that the work in the second stage of interviewing and engaging with the community will be critical. The Board is going to the community not with the "finished pie", but the "ingredients" and the community will decide what they want to add. This empowers their voice, and also requires more conversation.
- Within the Programmatic goals, Director Ward noted that in an early iteration the Board had discussed financial literacy as a goal, and because the District is doing this, it was dropped. Director Valliant believes this should be a stated goal. Director Carrillo also noted "life soft skills", including how to apply for jobs, and to understand car loans, and basic life skills that a lot of folks take for granted, and when students graduate they may need to learn on their own, so it will be important to educate them on these skills while in SPPS. While this would be difficult to frame metrics around, it is aligning to the directive and for Administration to create structure around it.
- The Board then discussed the possibility of financial literacy as a goal. Administration provided more details, including that as this course is rolled out next year as a requirement for graduation, the goals will be around implementation and seeing data for the baseline. They also noted the career interest inventory and the personal finance course is one way to ensure they are instructed

on this tool and have proper support for like skills for finance, and to set a baseline. Establishing metrics could be the beginning level, while knowing that each student will gain knowledge about financial topics. Administration also noted where this is happening in other classes, such as Freshman Focus at Johnson, and students gain skills in writing resumes and mock interviews for jobs.

- Director Valliant believes that we should have metrics on financial literacy, and she wants this to be a goal.
- Director Allen requested information on the total number of goals. Response: Each area is to have one to five goals, so these will not be narrowed down, unless we hear differently from community.
- A board member also noted that it will be important to talk about other districts and goals and growth patterns to show in context of percentages.
- Director Allen noted that, having worked in the schools, she knows that changes takes time, and has concerns about the implementation in the beginning stage because it is new, and there is a process to run smoothly.
- Director Carrillo suggested a goal that would direct Administration to create a scaffolding approach and then apply metrics.
- Financial literacy will be a graduation requirement, but we will not know the metrics right away. We could include it in a second round of engagement to continue to hear more. Director Ward suggested to move forward with the goals as presented, with continued engagement and Director Valliant could lead the financial literacy goals for consideration as we look to finalize the goals through the second round of engagement. Director Franco noted that he would be happy to collaborate on this, and while we are implementing new curriculum, we could utilize the opportunity to colleges feedback on areas missing in the current curriculum structure. Director Valliant noted this is a new program and we are not able to compare data to previous results. Director Ward noted he would be interested to be a lead on that in the second phase and analyzing the engagement and goals.
- Director Valliant requested information on the current goals of the District in embarking on the new financial literacy course. Administration provided details on the legislative action that requires this work and the requirement for graduation. There is also a pilot class with feedback from students, parents and faculty about how it is working. The course will change, with Critical Ethnic Studies as an example as a new course and the changes that have occurred to that course as it is implemented. Administration also provided details about passing percentages of students in Year 1 of this class. The Board also noted that we need to be working towards a goal in this course, and for it to be grounded with expectations about passing rates.
- Director Ward then brought the conversation back to if the Board should take time outside of the meeting to develop and postpone the preliminary goals, or to move forward with the preliminary goals with the understanding that the work will continue as the final goals are considered in a few months. Director Carrillo suggested to moved forward with the development of a second round of engagement and to develop questions around Civics and Financial Literacy and solicit feedback. There was also a suggestion to add an asterisk to the Civics and Financial Literacy goal, with preliminary goals are to be determined and then further refine with feedback from the community.
- Director Vue also thanked Executive Chief Stacey Gray Akyea for her working in helping to develop the programmatic goals and student outcomes goals.
- Direct Valliant requested information on the survey questions for mental health supports. It was noted this was addressed in the Restorative Practices area, and opting for the preemptive approach.

- It was also noted that the goals for the Board and Superintendent will be fluid as the Board continues their work with the new superintendent, Dr. Stacie Stanley, who will also be vital competent to these goals.
- Director Henderson requested information on the measuring of the self-evaluation, with progress monitoring, and the goal is to evaluate the goals determined by the Board. The thought process is to have more collective goals, and not individual evaluations of board members, but the collective in reaching those goals.
- Director Henderson reiterated the upcoming engagement for the community, and the plans to go to schools and communities, and PACs, to find ways to give back to students, and the second round of surveys. The survey goal is February, and while the engagement calendar is being finalized, the community should expect sessions February, March, and April.

**BF 34142** B.I.G.G.: Board Initiated Goals Governance - Goals Adoption

**MOTION:** Director Henderson moved to approve the preliminary goals as presented. Director Carrillo seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Franco	Yes
Director Valliant	Yes

## 10. INFORMATIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

### A. Policy Update

#### a. SECOND READING: Policy 550: Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices

Superintendent Thein then welcomed Jodi Danielson, Director of Schools and Learning, to present this report.

The presentation included information on the draft policy with the rationale and 6-12 principal perspective, implementation with staff and student focus group feedback with the initial implementation plan, and questions and discussion.

The rationale for the policy was reviewed including that MN legislature made a law in spring 2024 that all school districts must have a district policy regarding cell phones, and to minimize the impact of cell phones and personal electronic devices on academic performance, mental health, learning environments, and effective teaching.

The Policy 550 overview and introduction were shared, with the community feedback and where it shows in the policy. Information on 6-12 sites and principals, with the leading recommendation for those sites that consistent practices within schools that serve grades 6-12 (Creative Arts, Humboldt, OWL) are necessary.

Changes to the draft and where those changes occur, including how it shows in the policy were also reviewed in areas within the policy.

Within the January Focus Groups portion, staff feedback for successful implementation was shown, as well as feedback from student focus group including what they valued and their concerns, as well as suggestions for implementation.

The timeline for support and implementation was also presented, with the Third Reading at the February 18, 2025 Regular Meeting, the creation of the implementation plan in February-March, and Summer to provide resources.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

### **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Director Allen encouraged a restorative approach to personal electronic devices and language around positive and preventable, educational and restorative approach, and aligned with PBIS. We need positive approaches to this, and pass positive incentives to make students choose to put their phones away.
- Director Carrillo requested engagement information on the tools to hold devices versus no tools to hold devices. The data was split about 50/50.
- He also noted that the documented plans will need to be reviewed annually, and for sites to err on the side of restrictions. It will be difficult, especially in 6-12 sites, to determine the grade levels of students who are together, and the ability for sites to develop a plan that fits their building and program, with further conversations to understand the plans with the objective to reduce use of cell phones, and that it needs to be measured in some way.
- Director Franco requested further details on the feedback from 6-12 sites and the concern about times where middle school and high school students are in the same class, and if that is a current practice in the district. Response: An example of that is Advisory and Foundations, where it is intentionally multigrade for high school students and middle school students to learn from each other, mentor, and support.
- He also noted that it's important to implement at 6-8 consistently across the district, and feels that during those formidable years, that 6-12 buildings don't have exceptions for 6-8 on using their phones during passing time or lunch. Director Allen agreed, and thought of students who change schools and the difficulty in enforcing the rules in middle schools, and the confusion of changing school cultures. It needs to be consistent across the district.
- Director Franco noted that it needs to be clear that while there may be an opportunity for our 9-12 grade students to have an additional layer of flexibility during instructional time, passing time, or lunch, that during instructional time of Foundations or Advisory, there would not be an expectations, and the only exception would be non-instructional times.
- Director Franco also requested information within the Third Reading about the toolkit to be provided to school sites.
- Director Carrillo noted that the issue of consistency is important.
- Director Allen requested information on the budget for boxes or tools for holding phones, and feedback from staff. Director Henderson noted that changes could be made on this topic through the implementations. Director Valliant noted her learnings at the MSBA conference and locker boxes used in classrooms for phones.
- Director Ward noted that at the beginning of this process, the initial thought was that cell phones should be prohibited from bell-to-bell, and based on the feedback received, it would then be okay

for high schools to have the option to plan for more flexibility. He noted the feelings for 6-12 sites if we do decide to split our students into different expectations, or if we value consistency more for a bell-to-bell policy.

- A board member also requested details on smart watches and the definition of them. Smart watches used for medical reasons are the exception.
- There was also further discussion on 6-12 sites, and creating a habit for all students to not have phones.
- Director Valliant suggested that for 6-12 sites, students wear their IDs and there are different colors of ID by grade.
- Director Henderson requested details on preparation for staff when a student may refuse to put their phone away or don't engage, and to be clear with families to as preemptively for cell phones to be put away, and it is not a punishment, or way of restricting information or access.

### **13. BOARD OF EDUCATION**

#### A. Information Requests/Responses and Items for Future Agendas

- Director Allen requested information on discipline data, including by school and race, and with referrals, dismissals, suspensions and PPC data.
- She also requested a staffing report by school, and positions in those schools, and total investment in each category - including number of each position and dollars attached to those.
- Director Franco noted that he will be requesting reports on the budget.
- Director Valliant requested information on the Equity efforts and goals. She also requested an update on the GAP Upper Campus, Director Carrillo echoed a request for information on GAP, and requested to participate in those conversations.
- Director Carrillo seconded these requests, and he would like financial data, with information on positions that are open at each site in terms of unhired positions, and if those funds were repurposed or remain unhired, or filled with substitutes, and a framework of where there are needs to hire and an understanding. He requested information on positions that impact students.
- He also requested information on positions currently open at the central office.
- Director Henderson requested information on the transition to block schedules and the 8/2 schedule, and what that looks like, results, and challenges for schools in these transitions.

#### B. Board of Education Reports/Communications

- Director Henderson shared her experience in meeting with Somali staff at the East African Magnet School, and sharing about the work of the District, and it was great to share knowledge.
- Director Franco shared his time at the Karen New Year at Washington Tech. It was great to see the work of the KPAC and Office of Family Engagement and Community Partnerships. It is a celebration of the Karen community and their strength and resilience. He also mentioned his time spent at different athletic games throughout the city.
- Director Allen highlighted four students at Highland Park Senior High who were accepted to Hampton University, and were part of the HBCU tour. She also noted an app that allows students to apply to all HBCUs at once.
- Director Vue shared his experience at the Hmong Roman Popularized Alphabet event, and shared details on the standardization of the Hmong language.

### **14. ADJOURNMENT**

**Director Henderson moved to adjourn the meeting; Director Franco seconded the motion.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

Director Valliant	Yes
Director Henderson	Yes
Director Ward	Yes
Director Vue	Yes
Director Allen	Yes
Director Carrillo	Yes
Director Franco	Yes

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

#### **14. WORK SESSION**

The work session was called to order at 8:31 p.m. by Halla Henderson, Chair.

Those in attendance were Director Henderson, Director Ward, Director Valliant, Director Allen, Director Franco, Director Carrillo, Director Vue, Superintendent Thein, T. Sager, J. Danielson, E. Wacker, C. Long, K. Thao, C. Landreau, D. Moser, P. Pratt-Cook, S. Gray Akyea, S. Koppen, and S. Dahlke.

The purpose of this work session is for Administration and the Board to:

- Finalize FY26 budget assumptions
- Clarify the use of the unassigned and assigned fund balance for FY26

Director Henderson motioned to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Director Carrillo, and passed by acclaim.

The work session adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

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