

BIGG

Board-Initiated Goals Governance

Background

Three Board Members (Vue, Kopp, Ward) participated in Student Outcomes Focused Governance (SOFG) training through the Council of the Great City Schools in 2022. Two Board Members completed the training.

Former Chair Jim Vue and Former Vice-Chair Jessica Kopp took the lead on bringing SOFG to the Saint Paul Board of Education for consideration and working through how we might implement that governance framework.

We considered adopting the SOFG framework in 2023. At a Committee of the Board Meeting, we sifted through SOFG and amended it to fit our understanding of the role of the School Board. The CGCS decided not to move forward with our amended version of SOFG.

Background

Vice-Chair Uriah Ward worked on a new governance model informed by criticisms of SOFG, conversations with Board Members about their vision for governance, and the available research on school board effectiveness. Research for this new governance model was done through a Doctor of Public Administration program.

At the 2024 Board Retreat, this model was presented to the full board, who unanimously agreed to move forward. We spent the last two hours of our retreat collaborating on a plan to implement this framework. We appointed a workgroup to guide this process: Chair Halla Henderson, Vice-Chair Uriah Ward, Director Jim Vue.

Background

Directors Vue and Kopp had already worked through a plan to implement SOFG. We were able to use this work to create a thorough high-level plan to conduct the community engagement necessary to build these goals and ensure that they are representative of the needs of SPPS. Director Vue also gave this new framework a name: Board-Initiated Goals Governance (BIGG).

At a work session following our most recent COB meeting, we created two sub-workgroups to flesh out the details necessary to move forward. Carrillo, Allen, and Vue serve on the Data and Surveys Sub-Workgroup and will analyze the data we already have available and develop survey questions. Franco, Henderson, and Valliant serve on the Outreach and Engagement Sub-Workgroup and will develop our process for reaching out to community as we develop our goals.

Board-Initiated Goals Governance

BIGG is not SOFG. However, it does have a key similarity. Our highest priority is creating and monitoring goals focused on students. BIGG works toward this while allowing our Board to address broader community concerns and be a more significant part of decision-making processes.

Based on available data, community feedback, and board discussions, we plan to create four types of goals that will guide our work: Student Outcomes Goals, Programmatic Goals, District Relations Goals, and Internal Goals.

Student Outcomes Goals

We will pick 1-5 goals focused specifically on student outcomes. These should be SMART Goals (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) with 3-5 year timelines. We will monitor the efforts surrounding these goals and the progress made on these goals at regular BOE meetings.

Example:

Proficiency in (subject area) will increase from X% to Y% among (population) as measured by (metric) by (date).

Programmatic Goals

We will pick 1-5 goals focused on the means by which we serve our students. These will have their own time frames depending upon what makes sense for any given goal, will be monitored at regular BOE meetings, and will be part of district budget presentations to the Board if funds are affected.

Example:

The Superintendent will implement (method) as they work to improve (metric).

District Relations Goals

We will pick 1-5 goals focused on the Board's relationship with district administration. These goals will be monitored by the Executive Committee and reported out to the rest of the Board. We will create a new set of goals (or continue previous goals) at the following year's Board retreat.

Example:

When (situation) occurs, the Superintendent will (action) with the Board of Education.

Internal Goals

We will pick 1-5 goals focused on our own practices as a Board. These goals will be monitored by the Executive Committee and reported out to the Board. We will create a new set of goals (or continue previous goals) at the following year's Board retreat.

Example:

Board Members will (action) when (situation) within (timeframe).

Timeline

We are still working on the details of our timeline; but we will be moving quickly. We will be discussing this timeline and making decisions regarding this timeline at our April 3rd Committee of the Board meeting.

Once we have developed our goals, we will give the SPPS community opportunities to critique it and suggest changes. We hope to have these goals finalized by the end of 2024.

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Questions?