

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Minutes of the Board of Trustees' Special Meeting of October 19, 2023

SSFUSD Equity Definition

Equity, in SSFUSD, is defined as giving students what they need, when they need it to fulfill their potential.

OPEN SESSION - 6:00 p.m.

A. CALL TO ORDER

B. ROLL CALL

Board Members:	Ms. Amanda Anthony - Present Dr. Chialin Hsieh - Present Ms. Daina Lujan - Present Mrs. Patricia Murray - Present Mrs. Mina Richardson - Present Ms. Ira Sergio, Student Board Member - Excused
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Cabinet Members:	Dr. Shawnterra Moore, Superintendent - Present Mr. J. Marwan Hannon, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources and Student Services - Present Mr. Keith Irish, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services and Categorical Programs - Absent Mr. Ted O, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services - Present
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Vice President Patricia Murray arrived at 6:10 p.m.

Trustee Mina Richardson arrived at 6:32 p.m.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was led by Westborough MS student Carl Larosa.

D. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

We acknowledge that the South San Francisco Unified School District is located on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula.

We wish to pay our respects by acknowledging the Ancestors, Elders, and relatives of the Ramaytush Community and by affirming their sovereign rights as First Peoples.

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

E. COMMUNITY FORUM

a. Introduction by Superintendent Moore

Superintendent Shawnterra Moore explained the format for this Community Forum. The purpose of the meeting is for the Board to have an opportunity to converse with the community on a specific topic. This year, the focus is on the Strategic Plan since it is one of the District's main priorities. She provided a brief overview of the topic. After the presentation, the Board could ask any clarifying questions and community members had an opportunity to also ask questions and engage in a dialogue with the Board members.

b. Strategic Planning presentation

Dr. Moore said she was grateful to have the opportunity to provide the Board and community with current Strategic Planning efforts, and elicit feedback and insight from the Board and community about where the District is actually headed. "My vision all along has been for us to create a community plan that we all can own and have agency around. Not Dr. Moore's plan, but our community plan to ensure that every student in SSFUSD will thrive and enjoy a joyful, rigorous, engaging and inclusive experience during their time here."

We are Starting a Transformation as a District

Dr. Moore spoke about her personal experiences as a child, where some of her educators made her feel inferior. "I was made to feel as though I didn't matter. I wasn't heard, I wasn't seen, and oftentimes I wasn't expected to excel. I learned that much of this is because of the way I show up in the world. When I became a first-year teacher, my students had 14 substitutes and it was only October. They believed themselves to be dumb, worthless, not important. Many of whom were black and brown children, many of whom spoke a primary language other than English." She stated that "historically, the educational system oftentimes fails kids of color, kids who look like me, kids who may be neurodivergent, [or] kids who may be in lower socioeconomic households." Looking at the District's data and overall experiences, it can still be predicted which students will succeed and which will struggle. While SSFUSD is providing a solid education for many

students, this is not true of all students in the community. Last year, 50% of District students met or exceeded proficiency standards in ELA, 40% in math, and 24% were chronically absent. “It’s time for us as we are planning for the future to look systematically at our program, our practices, our people, our policies and seek to transform in such a way that we can give every student what they need when they need it so that they can and will thrive.”

The Superintendent said, “The vision for our efforts is to engage in transformational change to minimize student failure rates, to maximize overall proficiency rates, to increase student attendance, and to create a really strong culture of learning and a strong sense of belonging and inclusion in this District. We want to be able to do that in the most positive and productive ways.” She urged the community to help realize this vision so students can learn, thrive, and have a lasting and positive impact on the community. “Each and every kid counts, and each and every kid is counting on us to deliver on this promise of an equitable world class education.” “...what we do is more important than what we say or what we say we believe. Therefore, the essential question we must ask ourselves is, do we want to **be** right or do we want to **do** right?”

Promise to SSFUSD Students: Portrait of a Graduate (PoG)

Last year, thousands of students, families, and staff shared their vision for SSFUSD graduates. Community engagement and involvement is necessary to help make this PoG a reality.

As an educational community united in our commitment to equity, we work together to ensure that every graduate has the essential academic and social-emotional skills, knowledge, and habits to:		
Graduate aim	Characteristic	Description
LEARN <i>constantly as their life and world change</i>	Intellectual curiosity and critical thinking	Embraces a growth mindset and love of learning by seeking understanding, asking questions, and using data and evidence
	Academic excellence	Demonstrates mastery of all academic disciplines needed for post-secondary success
	Creativity and resourcefulness	Explores their creativity and finds new and innovative ways to solve problems
THRIVE <i>as a person</i>	Self-awareness	Confidently embraces their identities and understands their values, intentions, and impact on others
	Wellness	Lives a healthy lifestyle that promotes their physical, mental, and emotional well-being
	Real-world readiness	Uses life skills including time management, goal setting, self-discipline, motivation, and self-advocacy to navigate day-to-day responsibilities, overcome obstacles, and feel successful
NAVIGATE <i>their future purposefully</i>	Career and/or college readiness	Understands their options after high school (education, careers, entrepreneurship), and is prepared for success in whatever path they choose
	Technology skills	Uses current technologies fluently to meet their needs and solve problems
	Financial literacy	Understands the importance of money management and has the skills to make informed short and long-term financial decisions
IMPACT <i>their community for the better</i>	Collaboration	Demonstrates empathy, teamwork, effective communication, and respect to collaborate effectively toward a common goal
	Community service and engagement	Finds opportunities to support others and be involved in their communities

Some changes were made immediately last year based on community feedback such as financial literacy electives in secondary schools and doubling the number of community liaisons in the District.

District-wide Priorities

With the feedback, they created six goals. The following shows what they are focusing on this year.

Academic Excellence

Strengthening collaborative cycles of inquiry at schools.

Dr. Moore said, "It's on elevating our instruction and ways that will increase engagement and student talk in the classroom, using our cycle of inquiry process to identify a problem that we're going to solve, utilizing a protocol that will help us understand that problem, and then plan for it, ways to address to see if our intentional efforts in the classroom are having the intended impact in improving student learning."

Talent Management

Revamping recruitment and hiring practices and launching a new professional learning system for staff.

This focuses on the District's recruitment and hiring practices and increasing diversity in staffing. It will also emphasize retaining staff and supporting them with specific professional learning opportunities being provided.

Operational & Fiscal Stewardship

Understanding school needs to help develop budgets, and using our new bond funds to improve our facilities.

She said this focus is on facilities improvement with the recently passed bond program. "We're excited about all of our priorities and particularly this one, because we have a process that's in place this year to go to our school communities, to hear what it is they most want and to have a community conversation about what this may be and what that may look like. Unfortunately, in the past, some of our schools didn't receive as much as other schools received, and so we're just excited to have the conversation in our community and figure out the best pathway forward. The other part of this priority is all about looking at our budgets and allocating them more equitably based on needs of the school."

Community Engagement & Connectedness

Reducing chronic absenteeism and strengthening positive student culture.

This is about “really making sure our students are at school so that they can learn. So, we are implementing a new reduction in chronic absenteeism focus, looking also at how do we elevate and have positive student cultures.”

Educational Equity

Develop a transformative, equity-centered multi-year strategic plan to bring our Portrait of a Graduate to life.

This is “a through-line in SSF for everything that we do. As such, we are utilizing this particular lens of equity to develop a multi-year Strategic Plan that will make a PoG a reality, so what we say, what we do, our policies, our practices, and our programs will be through the lens of equity to realize this vision for our kiddos.”

Culture & Communication

Strengthen culture and communication through transparency, strong relationships, two-way communication and data-driven decision making.

“We can strengthen relationships and two-way communication, and use the feedback that we get as data and information on what we need to do differently, or even to do better.”

How Will We Continue Our Transformation?

This year, creating a Strategic Plan will bring the PoG to life over the next five years. We want to make the PoG “...a reality, and actualize it in every classroom, every day, with every child. Our community is going to help us build the plan.”

- A **Steering Committee** will be meeting a few times each month and develop the five-year plan based on research and community input. The committee will make a Board recommendation. Dr. Moore added, “But of course we know it’s not all about having District representation leading this work. We know our entire community should be leading.”
- **Staff Conversations** are taking place four times this year with families, and students, so everyone can be involved in developing the plan. School sites are playing a critical role in bringing communities together and having conversations about what to prioritize, what is going well or what needs to be improved. The following suggested priorities and initiatives for the plan were included in responses from over 1,000 families and staff.

Suggested Priorities and Initiatives for the Plan

- Chronic absenteeism

- Mental health systems
- Recruitment and retention
- Discipline and behavior practices
- Equitable distribution of resources
- Highly-effective, focused teaching practices
- Technology training for teachers
- Renewed focus for academic rigor and excellent instructional practices
- Adopt and implement the Portrait of a Graduate
- Refine and implement a stronger multilingual learner instructional model
- Improve middle and high school students' financial literacy

Three Important Questions

Superintendent Moore said this month, the following three important questions, which are different for staff, families, and students are being asked.

Staff - What actions can we take to **bring the Portrait of a Graduate to life** (at the individual, school, or district level)?

Families - To what extent do you **feel like partners in your student's success at school**, and can we do to strengthen that?

Students - To what extent do you **feel ready for career and/or college**, and what can we do to prepare you better? Middle and high school students are being asked to elicit feedback directly from the students.

Board Insights

Dr. Moore said the Board was given an opportunity to reflect on the PoG and what needs to be done first to make that promise come true based on what has already been developed.

Vice President Murray said this is exciting, shows a transformational change, and brings it all into focus. She thanked staff for the work they have done to make the plan a reality and wants to watch the steering committee at work.

Trustee Daina Lujan said the PoG is inspirational and fills her with hope for every student. She sees values for first steps, in analyzing community feedback in real time and "...going for wins as soon as we can, but also doing it in a way where...it also aligns with our Strategic Plan." It is not just collecting data. "...we have a vision for five years out but we're also chipping away and making progress along the way."

Trustee Amanda Anthony said she was excited about the plan and was

not aware the work was brought down to individual sites and looks forward to that feedback. Dr. Moore replied that "...one of our real acknowledgments and learning through last year, because we did a lot of community engagement, through surveys, through in-person focus groups, through interviews, through the community conversations and what we realized is we wanted to make sure that everyone in our District had a touch point, so...this year we changed our model instead of us really doing a lot of the leading, we meet with a steering committee, then we meet with all school leaders, and we want to make sure that they're well prepared, so they have facilitation guides. They have presentations, so that they know what they're going to do with their communities..." "And we have a person who supports us, Ann Roy, who is online today, who has just been phenomenal at helping...if anybody has questions about the process or needs help with facilitating, or they invite her to come and observe, and it's just in terms of getting people excited and engaged because they also can see it through the lens of their grade span or their grade. So we're barely scratching the surface right now, because...there's more that needs to be done in terms of really codifying it." "Whether it's going to be at kindergarten...or at elementary, this is what it looks like, the steering committee is still working on that."

Trustee Anthony noted the August/September survey emphasized mental health and being healthy and whole in order to learn. Looking at Thrive and living a healthy lifestyle is a great place to start. Dr. Moore suggested a self-awareness assessment, on wellness, with elementary students. She noted that Thrive with mental health might be something they could initiate first. Vice President Murray said elementary schools "...were kind of implementing that social emotional health, and they were talking about qualities that make them a better person and what makes them effective learners. This is what we're working on, this is what we want for our kids." President Chialin Hsieh said that those characteristics might not be right for everyone at the same time. Dr. Moore agreed that they could be differentiated based on grade span. Dr. Hsieh said career and college readiness or technology skills might be good for secondary students to focus on this year, while elementary students work on something else.

Dr. Hsieh said she appreciated the process that demonstrates the beliefs of the Board and community on diversity, equity, and inclusion "...and how Dr. Moore and the leadership is structured, getting feedback from our community, access, and also inclusivity. I think we are modeling what we say, and then we are doing it. "

President Hsieh said having each presentation slide in both English and Spanish demonstrated how the District is trying to meet the needs

of the community. This bi-lingual approach speaks volumes and people respond to it.

Trustee Lujan said Dr. Hsieh helped her to see the correlation between this and Common Core State Standards which builds one layer upon another. It helped her to see academic excellence and self-awareness, wellness, and collaboration as through lines "...but then also having targeted approaches to certain things like financial literacy, beginning in middle school...and then we build upon it." She said that they can pick an area of focus and feel successful.

Dr. Moore shared that a conversation at the last steering committee meeting was looking at priorities and developing initiatives, then launching them in 2024-25. So they are taking a step back to evaluate what makes sense and the added layer might be for elementary school which is different from middle school and different from high school.

Trustee Anthony spoke about college and career readiness. She said there is a big push towards skills-based hiring and different characteristics lend themselves to jobs such as teaching, child care, etc. Students should be given more options based on their skills and said they could be encouraged without formal career fairs.

President Hsieh tasked the steering committee with how to and what to use to measure the impact of the Strategic Plan priorities. She said the outcomes of the measurements can be short or long term. The long term is the graduates and which college or university they attend. For short term there will be small wins to celebrate. "So [for] short term/long terms, if we can identify that, and [with] the school's presentation, then we can see the internal measures each semester for each academic year, how students grow." This would be a formative, not summative assessment.

Dr. Moore said, "We are not there yet but we have begun, as a steering committee, to talk about that." "I want to make sure that we as a community have established strong conviction behind the work that we're doing. We're trying to shift conditions to innovation and change, and so we want to make sure that we are there, and we've galvanized enough people around this community's plan to be able to do that. But we have talked about the implementation data as well as impact, which is what I think you mean with the how and what. What are we going to measure, how do we know if it's had the intended impact, and we've started talking about leading and lagging indicators." "...but there might be some growth goals and metrics that we can look at to build into the plan. We just haven't made it there."

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Elaijah Larosa, the Westborough MS ASB Treasurer, spoke about her school's field and blacktop. More and more students are getting injured on the field because it is uneven and has gopher holes. She said the school would appreciate the Board helping out with repairs.

Natalie Wong, a Westborough MS teacher, also spoke about the field and blacktop. The bleachers are in disrepair. Students are being injured by falling on the blacktop. She asked the Board to allot funds for repairs and pointed out that it is not equitable that Alta Loma MS and Parkway Heights MS have usable fields and blacktops. She asked that they be a priority for this issue.

Stephanie Tejedo, a Westborough MS parent, asked about the timeline to repair the field and blacktop so students can safely do PE and host events. She noted that several incidents have occurred on the blacktop due to loose gravel from cars during drop-off and pickup plus having the weekend motorcycle classes there. She encouraged the Board to prioritize the repairs as one of the first bond projects.

Trisha Barry, a Westborough MS teacher, also spoke about their field and quality of the blacktop. "Our blacktop serves not just as a classroom to our PE classes but as the primary drop-off and pickup location for our students due to the busy traffic on Westborough Boulevard. In addition to school traffic, every Saturday motorcycle classes cause wear and tear to our blacktop as well." The District makes money from those classes, but the students are the priority.

Sueanna Wong, a Westborough MS parent, said the field is an unusable space and needs to be fixed. Students have been injured for years on the blacktop. Other middle schools have new fields used for PE. She asked that bond funds be prioritized to fix the field before a very bad accident occurs.

Trustee Anthony asked whether the school or the District decides on the blacktop rental for the motorcycle classes and whether another site could be used. Mr. O said that might be an option. He confirmed they are addressing fixing the blacktop now as it is a safety priority. A contractor will visit the site at the end of October or early November "...and basically do all the repairs on the blacktop to make it usable and safe, until we have the bond funds ready to do the project."

Trustee Lujan thanked Mr. O for prioritizing the field and blacktop and those who spoke on repairing them. She asked about the timeline for these projects. Mr. O replied, "Right now we're basically establishing a whole new bond program, so that's why it takes a little bit of time to prioritize. But we have looked at safety and...some of the schools that did not get as much funds in the past, so we are looking at those as a priority. We'll probably have more discussion with the Board subcommittee, with the two board members...and probably bring

recommendations to the full Board for approval afterwards.” After Friday’s CBOC meeting, he will schedule the first subcommittee meeting where they would review priorities which Facilities staff and he have been discussing. But they have to get the subcommittee together to share thoughts. Dr. Moore said it is a process and Mr. O cannot provide definitive timelines “...because we don't want to overpromise and underdeliver. So what we will do is make a commitment that as we are convening different groups, we make sure we let the Board and the community know. We are going to be engaging school sites as well.” This way everyone has a seat at the table.

Trustee Anthony said she hears a lot about gopher holes from the different campuses and asked what the long term strategy is for dealing with this. Mr. O. replied groups will be established to represent the school, the principal, community members, staff, and students. Because there is a set amount of funds, they will determine their highest priorities “...but there is safety that we're going to address for sure.” This may include leaking roofs or underground pipes which need to be replaced. Then the school site committees will decide how to use the remaining funds allotted to them.

Dr. Hsieh asked the Facilities subcommittee to prioritize safety, security, and health and then gradually build up from there.

Trustee Richardson said she understands that parents want to prioritize their school, but the District has a plan in place. It is important for the public to know there is a timeline that outlines programs or which sites will receive the first bond funding. She has seen the bond project list and all schools are included and “...it's up to you...to keep an eye on what's happening in the timeline with your school.” Mr. O confirmed that the final decisions are made by the Board with input from the sites. He said all the information is available on the District’s website including the Facilities Master Plan and estimated allocations for each school with some priorities.

Vice President Murray said when she joined the Board in 2016, Trustees picked out three high priorities. Fixing the Westborough MS blacktop and field was on the list. While they have had repairs here and there, they are talking about students getting the best education and the blacktop and field should be available to them. “I'm sorry it hasn't been done, but it something that's on our list.” Mr. O agreed that at the time the District did not have enough bond money and the priority was to fund high schools first, then the rest of the schools would be addressed.

ADJOURNMENT - 6:52 p.m.