

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

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

**November 5, 2025
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, E. Valliant, J. Vue, C. Franco, Y. Carrillo, H. Henderson, C. Allen

Staff: Superintendent Stanley, K. Bergstrom

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE MAIN AGENDA

MOTION: Director Ward moved to change the order of the main agenda, **Contract for Study of Charter Schools to follow Mid-Term Txuj Ci Facilities: Additional Engagement Summary**. The motion was seconded by Director Henderson. It passed by acclaim.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Superintendent Stanley noted that it is a good day – our community members supported us by approving the referendum with 65% in favor. She thanked our community members, individuals who helped to support this including door-knocking with SPFE and other unions. It is a happy day, and will make a difference for our students for years to come. Thank you Saint Paul.

Director Henderson noted it was wonderful to see the District, campaign, and our community to show they are ready to invest in our students. She thanked the Superintendent and the responsibility to show the investment to acknowledge and move the futures of our students forward. She is happy to be in this space, instead of one with a massive deficit.

Director Carrillo added that we brought to the community a very pointed request, and the community responded with generosity that goes beyond generous in abundance, but in a time where all costs have increased, and salaries not matched those increases. The community is making an investment in the time of need, and it resonates emotionally with him, which was mentioned as an issue. It makes the response and what we do with this investment in terms of sustaining existing programs, and also focusing on goals to lift up all students. He is happy and very engaged in doing this work together.

5. SYSTEMIC EQUITY

Dr. Stacey Grey Akyea then presented this report.

The purpose was to provide an update on the strategies related to systemic equity since May 2023, and topics included:

- Office of Equity organizational alignment
- Staffing
- Systemic Equity Plan and work

- Next Steps

The current state of Systemic Equity, and desired state were shared, as well as Equity Standards. The Beta program with counselors was also reported, including the key concepts and demonstrations of this work.

A metaphor of an iceberg as a way to see the structures and influences was also shared, including the event, pattern, structure(s), and mental model. Self-study work was also reported. Student equity and leadership development was shared, as well as information about the Equity Summit. Foundational training was also recapped, including the revised introductory training and July 2025 soft launch with 13 participants. Next steps included actions in building capacity, district approach and response, building equity-based relationships, and feedback and monitoring.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Carrillo noted questions about the slide with culturally responsive instruction self-study, and appreciate the concept of self-study and time to invest to look at practices, policies, and actions to help to fulfill the goal, or to harm the objective. Is there a rubric or pattern of building self-study into the work of this topic in the Office of Equity on an ongoing basis, or one-time to help iterate the next step? Response: We are not sure for the first year. By the end of the year, it was not a one-off. The value in self-study is that we were able to take time and impact and instruction in way not based on content – content was the vehicle, but the cultural displays of learning and what they are and how to recognize them, and the appropriate response, and what happens in the context of understanding race, gender, intersectionality, and unpacking, as well as students as sense makers, and time focused on that. That was a small part that became clear to move forward, and look at more instruction and have more practices to be more open. It is not a one-off. For the question about the rubric, we are not there yet. When it does become time for a rubric, it may be a different tool.
 - He applauded the opportunity to do that, and is interested in an organization to continually look at practices to be nimble. The worst we can do is think we are doing great - we may be in some areas, but in others, we are losing ground. We need to look at this effort and where it is going, investments, and efforts to implement.
- Director Allen requested information about the program with counselors and the pilot program to determine counselors as the tools. Response: It was a situation where counselors had done work with the Office of Equity, and there were some new lead counselors who were interested in moving forward, as well as Executive Director Green who is grounded in the work.
 - Director Allen noted that we need to address equity in the classroom, since that is where our students are and our priority. It feels like we are passing that responsibility to another department, who also need to do the work. We want them to work together – she is concerned they may not have the tools necessary to move equity into the classroom and another layer to overcome. She also provided a personal experience on a packet distributed on anti-bullying day. The statement was that we should respect everyone – the images given to the first graders was that packet, which was from the counseling office. That is concerning, and the counseling office working with the Office of Equity and then take the lead to show us the way, and that is concerning. How are they embedded in that plan, and what are we going to do to support the counseling office to ensure they are passing out equitable materials. Response: The equity standards are designed to serve as a foundation, and the pilot with counselors was to see the approach to using equity standards is feasible. It is not the intent for the counselors to lead the equity work in the district – that is an important distinction and the Office of Equity is uniquely suited to do equity work where we are. Previous iterations were to do equity work and then go out to change the entire system, which has not been effective. We are living in an extremely complicated world where there have been years of equity work, yet inequities are pervasive and they continue, and have not seen any one thing make a major difference. We need to approach it differently – that situation is not isolated. There are patterns that exist and mental models. It is the desire to do systemic work that creates an environment where it is less likely. Currently our environment support inequities, isolation, and practices and procedures that are not aware, and the desire is to create a different environment –

that does not stop the incidents, but also need ways to repair harm, and partnerships with community. We need to build in supports. At the core of what we do as a teaching and learning environment is classrooms – we will not intervene our way out of a Tier 1 situation and that is systemic work.

- Director Allen noted her concerns about the worksheets distributed and the inequity that was pictured, and repair work to help students to not continue to perpetuate this harm. We have been working on equity since 2007, and even before that. How does something like that pass from the counselor to the teacher to the student, without someone stating it is not okay. There are concerns that it is moving slow, and every week we are systemically harming groups of students. She hopes that something will show change in equity report, and safely learn the curriculum without being psychologically harmed, and not tagged with other harm. She is waiting for that day, and equity is a work in progress, but moments to see our kids are okay, but not consistently seeing that. Dr. Stanley noted that the work in equity is inside-out process and requires all to love themselves, slow down, and think and question self and one another. In education, the work is about managing the dynamics of difference and conflict. We need to be comfortable in talking and questioning about equity, and challenge that and to be okay with challenging it. It is incredibly complex. The development of the framework and appreciation for “systemic” and move away from pockets of success, and becomes a norm. We have not been there for a while, and it is work we need to do.
- Director Vue appreciates this work and something that is existing, and more service-oriented model of equity, and to figure out what worked and to stay and grow, and what needed to go away. This started in 2023, and has been a long process. He also noted Courageous Conversations, and how SPPS adapted. His concern was what it looks like for SPPS – depending on those in the district. The work that has been done to this point, is it closer to that point for SPPS? Response: One of the very first steps for our organization is to understand who is in our community and this shows up in the CRI area, but not isolated. There is a very core component of this that is being able to manage the dynamics of difference, and part of that is knowing the difference and understanding self and others. It is a very important part to understand our students, and the communities, identities, and intersections they represent. Without having some understanding, it’s a loss. Yes, there is an important component to understand who is our community, and to co-create our desired state to represent all of us.
- Director Valliant noted questions about organizational alignment and about race, gender, and inclusion, as two pieces as intersectionality. She wants to know more about that conversation and start to happen, and context, and how it will be a part of the overall work. We are trying to be more focused around the strategic plan, and what it will look like. For the systemic approach, and intersections, she requested clarifications for both internal and external work. She also requested information on equity looks like to leveraging partnerships.
- Director Franco appreciated the iceberg metaphor and examine and navigate an incident. One of the items of note is that the structures that we have in place as a district and the examples of high school in the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. We have previously discussed at what point are we able to dissect that and the structures in place and to examine the structures from the equity lens and standards lens. Is there some type of report to emerge based on subset of structures or systems. He does believe the equity standards make sense, and appreciation for that we can’t intervene out of a Tier 1 problem, and how we navigate those issues at the same time to move the needle, while systemic work continues to emerge.

5. MID-TERM TXUJ CI FACILITIES: ADDITIONAL ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Dr. Stanley then presented this report.

First was information about the “engagement sprint” - On October 7, 2025, the Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) leadership team provided information to the Board of Education regarding mid-term options from the Txuj Ci Facilities workgroup. During the discussion portion of this meeting, Board Director Yusef Carrillo asked, “Can we create a ‘sprint’ within the next few weeks where we can charge ourselves to commit to goals of engagement and thought processes? Then we either conclude with the community the best option is to look at the whole picture for a better long/mid-term solution, or an option to mitigate the current situation in the 26-27 school year.”

Community engagement details were shared at opportunities at Hazel Park, Txuj Ci, and Hazel Park/Txuj Ci combined.

The engagement summary detailed:

- There appear to be related but distinct perspectives across the three impacted communities.
- There are ways in which all impacted communities converge
- There are ways in which all impacted communities differ

The full presentation, including the additional engagement summary and supplemental documentation, can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Henderson noted reflections from the conversations with folks, and there are a couple of big themes – including a deep feeling of hurt, distrust, and the district is unable or unwilling to support. It is not to place blame or shame, but it was clear. The other piece is that the district and responding to the ask to a single site for Txuj Ci has been reactionary. These options are also that, and the conversation is reactionary. We are reacting to decisions that have impacts. She is grappling with the need for a clear end point, and think we have it in some regards with a single site, and the path to get there and steps to be met for community to trust the process be followed, and not continuing to move the goalpost, which is a fear for many. Her current place is not big questions or thoughts about engagement sessions, but looking for clarity and clear next steps and ways in which our community is going to be able to see from now to the future to walk into the school building with the checkpoints in place.
- Director Vue noted the importance for context in which this information was gathered, and provided a synthesis timeline of the Txuj Ci work beginning in the summer of 2023. In August of 2023, there was a welcome email to the East Learning Hub – no where did it say it would be HDL PreK classroom, but at September 1 with a welcome letter from the teacher. Between August 22, 2023 and September, something changed where sections of PreK moved from Txuj Ci to the Learning Hub. In the Fall of 2023, parents began to speak at Public Comment that the school was split into three buildings, and the formation of the workgroup, with the first meeting in December 2023. One of the first tasks was to determine a mid-term decision to remedy why the PreK is in a third building. At the end of January 2024, the workgroup made the decision, with Txuj Ci Upper and Lower, with the presentation indicated that it was only supposed to hold for 5 years from January 2024. The workgroup then had to design the program to be put on the 10-year FMP and how that building will be utilized. Through that work and into the Fall of 2024, there was an updated timeline from Facilities to construct the building, which was longer than originally presented – and more like eight years. At the February 2025, this was the primary concern and being proactive, and the direction was to reconvene the workgroup to address the current configuration. The workgroup did that, and by March 2025, the work was completed with the options presented. One of the challenges of these options, the next steps was to go to Senior Executive Leadership to cost-out, design an implementation plan, and engage with the community. There was a delay, the Superintendent did not know until September 11. That is where the harm that was described – expectations were created that Administration committed this workgroup, and changes down the line. We are now repeating this. The harm is visible and felt at Txuj Ci Upper and Lower communities. He also recommended restorative practices between the Board, Superintendent, Senior Executive Leadership, and the communities.
- Director Ward noted the two options, and heard that the community did not pick Hazel Park. The recommendations from the workgroup were Prosperity Heights and another school on the East Side that has space. Some families have pushed back on the idea that they named Hazel Park, and he felt that others felt offended that the suggestion was from them. Director Vue noted that this was presented in the stakeholder meetings, with a utilization study that determined Hazel Park to be a site, but not a choice by the workgroup.
- Director Ward also noted that there is a pain and distrust, which goes back years, and some is from a feeling as if there was an indication that this PreK-8 building was coming up faster than what has turned out to be the case. As we are discussing interim options, we can say it is in the plan to be available

between 2031 and 2033, and the feeling that even though it was voted on, there is not a trust that it will be delivered upon. There is a perception we have moved it back once, and it may happen again. As we were discussing the two options, the feedback heard from others is that it seems there is not excitement for either option. The Hazel Park community is nervous about that changes, and Txuj Ci families seemed worried about the programs being split, and more space immediately, and room to grow in enrollment before the 2031-2033 date. At the joint listening session at Washington, there was some disagreement about whether or not the location needed to be located on the East Side.

- Director Carrillo noted that throughout the process and the intent of asking for a “sprint” to reassess, we may need some clarity, and the outcome was less clear, and less clear about what the community as a whole wants, and what we offer to the community. We inherited a lot of harm done (i.e. Envision, and before), which papered over the issues and moving from school to school, and we expect them to be fine. We operate under assumption that moving folks around is a perfect and fine way to handle our enrollment issues. Truth is that there are sometimes no options. It is more about systemically speaking, this goes back to equity, and we operate under a mental framework. We need to start addressing this, and there is a lot of harm done to communities historically, and will continue unless we address them. In listening to multiple different groups, the consensus is that the options are not the best – they constrain enrollment and both harm our communities. We don’t celebrate the diversity enough, and we struggle with the need to be a school and a program. It would be wrong to assume diverse educational experiences are bad, but should have the ability for folks to choose, and repair harm done historically in this community. He would support that we as an organization seek to repair and restore these relationships with our community. He struggles with the community engagement, and expected more clarity, but the clarity was more emotional than practical. This organization needs better practices for decisions with a deep impact in the community, and organizationally having a rubric or practice handbook to commit to with our community for changes and process, and bring community into the decision making process. We need to change and change the way our organization approaches restructuring and our portfolio management, and in a human-centric way and treats our community with dignity.
- Director Ward noted a question what appeared to be confusion around PreK-8, and only HDL or HDL and cultural studies. Response: One of the suggestions to bring is to have the Txuj Ci Workgroup present their complete work and that at the December meeting, the workgroup to present their work. It is supposed to be HDL and culture studies.
- Director Franco noted he had the opportunity to attend the Hazel Park, Txuj Ci individual community feedback sessions, and joint feedback session at Washington. He believes the report prepared does give accurate report about the data that was collected, and appreciate the raw data to get a sense of the summary provided. There is a lot of harm that has existed, and has led to mistrust that continues. As we dive deeper into the interim decision or plan, and owning and acknowledging the work posed to do, it’s making “negative deposits” into communities about the ultimate decision. Community has been calling on the education system as a whole to do things differently, honor culture, and listen to community and families. Those are possible in our system, and it is a bigger fix than the example ahead of us. He left the engagement sessions feeling like there was no good option in the interim to satisfy the desire and the charge of the workgroup. Each community wants and needs to maintain their sense of community, able to maintain their sense of needs of families, and not live in constant stress put onto them by a possible merge without answers. He is struggling with it because he wants to ensure we honor and move forward a recommendation for an interim plan for Txuj Ci based on the recommendations and feedback from the workgroup and also know that the only way to understand if that is possible and the right move is to actually be including them in each step because it doesn’t appear there was a clean hand-off for the workgroup to say it was recommendations to then take in and come up with a plan based on that. Each community has their own set of fears around any and all of the recommendations.
- Director Allen requested clarification that in 2023, was that the year that we started all of the PreK hubs? Response: Yes.
 - There were a lot of schools where parents were notified about the hubs instead of attendance at their community schools. Response: We did combine sections throughout the district, there was the West Hub and the East Hub, and an intentional effort to increase enrollment and one way is through PreK and a high retention rate to kindergarten.

- It was part of Envision to increase enrollment for that program, as well as others. There was also an effort to establish our main priority as an increase to enrollment, and Envision was the foundation to restructure the district to realign around the strategic plan with facilities and efficiency. The plan was Onward SPPS, which was after the difficult work to close schools and hard decisions with students to move. Once the decisions were made, the goal was Onward SPPS, and we added the East Hub, West Hub, and East African, as well as the Karen program.
- Director Allen noted there has been harm through the process, but the initial harm in the work by the workgroup that happened across the district, and purposeful for business reasons. The Board at the time made the decision to close schools, and shift programs, and uncomfortable decisions – in the long-term it would be better for the district, and to highlight that in the process of this work, there has been significant investments that the program is thriving, and other pieces to a magnet school and curriculum. In thinking about a program like this, and like to continue to go deep. She understands the frustration of how these shifts can happen, and here we are now – while not negating the harm in the process, but in a current deficit and investments for a community to have a space that is safe, a curriculum that is what the community had hoped, and hoping to implement understanding and compassion to the process around the work that has been done, and understanding that this district has been making efforts to restore the relationship with all communities, with some challenges and movement differences. If we are going to restore and rebuild, there has to be acknowledgement on both sides – what is being done from a school district side, and work with the community side. We both have to understand each other.
- Director Vue noted that a few board members came away from the stakeholder engagement with more questions than clarity – but there were direct questions asked, and to provide that clarity, he would like Administration to answer those questions. That will provide clarity from this engagement. He also encouraged board members to visit these schools, see them in their space, in their community, and to do that before making a decision on their school community. He also goes back to the workgroup to present their work and in their own words at the December Committee of the Board before voting on this at the December 16th Regular Meeting. Director Henderson noted the plan n at least pairs to go to the three schools to have a conversation and be in a space to gain perspectives and able to be in those spaces.
- Dr. Stanley noted board members will be scheduling visits to Upper and Lower Campuses, and Hazel Park. Director Vue noted the questions and notes gathered from the individual and stakeholder meetings, and recommend that board members received the list of questions and ensure they were answered, and to show respect that the communities were listened to by Administration. Dr. Stanley then provided further information on the information gathered, including timeline for the Karen program, East African magnet program, and Afrocentric program, as well as how to create transparency, and another was what is the long term plan and a Txuj Ci campus in 2031, 2032, or 2033. Director Vue noted that those were some of the questions, but rely on the notetakers who captured those questions.
- Director Valliant then shared her thoughts around difficult situations and making a decision that was difficult, but given the situation and decision it may be the best, but not popular decision. When a person or group advocating on behalf, it may feel like the work done was for nothing in finding out it won't happen or experience, but depending on the reason or motivation, there is a rationale for a sense of loss, but the community will be able to experience it – it may not be an individual benefit, but other community members will have what was fought for and will manifest through the hard work. She also noted her feelings around three moves in the best interest in the program – she still does not like either of the options, but wondering if we choose one option and it goes horribly and the plan afterwards. She is struggling with these items, and thinking about, and working through, as well as budget decisions to keep at a sustainable place and other decisions to make. She noted the ways to reconcile the different opinions on this topic.
- Director Henderson noted that since we moved 5th grade to Upper, and the understanding of if everything stays the same, what it means for the current Lower and Upper to continue to grow, or stay on the path they are on – a real fear heard is that either option, or stayed the same, there will be a loss of sections, and what it looks like for the school and the ability to continue to thrive. That is a piece of information also needed.
- Director Vue reiterated the question about the workgroup to present at the December Committee of the Board. There is an impact if we do nothing too, and the workgroup will be able to answer many

questions for the Board to make a decision on December 16th. Director Ward noted the current proposed agenda for the December Committee of the Board, and the next Executive Committee meeting date, with the conversation to occur at that meeting. Director Vue noted that we need to be mindful of the date and preparation time for the workgroup to present.

- Dr. Stanley acknowledged that Option A and Option B presented in March 2025 should have been more fully vetted for the financial considerations prior to bringing them forward to the work group. In addition a clearer communication process should have been used to engage with the broader community to keep stakeholders well informed. While the oversight in these areas was not intended to be harmful the reality is the impact was detrimental to psychological safety and trust with our Hmong community. The abrupt introduction of Hazel Park created anxiety, frustration and distrust in the community. It is intent versus impact needs to be considered, and it should have occurred differently. She empathizes with our Hmong community, who have been waiting for a K-8 school, and the complexity of identifying has become fully apparent during this process. During the FMP presentation in July 2025, SPPS committed to a K-8 school for Txuj Ci opening in 2031, 2032, or 2033. Regardless of the decision that the Board will make on December 16, 2025, and as we conduct the facilities portfolio analysis, she is committed to sharing openly the factors to allow us to accelerate, barriers that may exist, and how decisions will be made. We can move forward on a K-8 Txuj Ci school with the harnessing of the innovative spirit brought forth by this nationally recognized model of Hmong Dual Language program. These will be shared investments to ensure the students served by Txuj Ci will meet the vision of SPPS for students to think critically, pursue their dreams, and change the world.

6. POLICY UPDATE

a. Policy 535.00: Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO)

Beth Coleman, Assistant Director, School Counseling & Career Pathways and John Eschenbacher, Lead High School Counselor, then presented this item.

This policy was adopted in 2018, and this is the first revision since the adoption. Proposed updates include a change to the new format, and there were slight adjustment to the wording, two items were added, and a definition of Post Secondary Enrollment Options was included.

The full presentation and draft of the proposed policy revisions can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Allen noted questions about when a student is enrolled in PSEO, they are enrolled at that university? Response: Yes.
 - Do they need to apply to that university, or is it a special process? Response: Usually students work closely with their school counselor on the process. Universities do have eligibility requirements, and the student does apply directly to the college.
 - If the student is set to graduate with all high school credits at the end of the 11th grade year, but wants to stay in high school, should they enroll in PSEO, to have access to the school to participate in sports? Response: Yes, that is correct.
- The Board agreed to move these proposed changes forward to the three-reading process.

b. Policy 618.00: Research

Kara Arzamendia, Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment, then presented this item.

Proposed updated include a Policy Purpose, definitions, additions of district or programs as a research entity, and addition of a designee to develop procedures by which research projects may be approved.

The full presentation and draft of the proposed policy revisions can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- The Board agreed to move these proposed changes forward to the three-reading process.

c. Policy 521.00: Student Surveys

Kara Arzamendia, Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment, then presented this item.

Changes to the proposed updated policy include a transition to the new policy format with a General Statement of Policy, changes to the section where no student is required to participate in a survey that contains certain topics, updates to the list of topics that are considered more sensitive in nature, and updates to the outdated gendered language.

The full presentation and draft of the proposed policy revisions can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- The Board agreed to move these proposed changes forward to the three-reading process.

d. Minnesota Paid Leave

Pat Pratt-Cook, Executive Chief of Human Resources, then presented this item.

Included in the presentation was information on Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML), including financial stability during critical times, job protection, broad coverage, and support for life events. The effective date and eligibility data was also shared. Information on the amount of leave available for each year was presented, including if leave has to be taken all at once, intermittent leave, employees who welcome a child in 2025 and bonding time in 2026, and examples of requests received to date.

Sick leave data for 2022 to 2025 was also shared, including teacher leave data and sick leave data by union.

Information on the qualifications as a family member were also shared.

Financial implications were reviewed.

The proposed policy 420.00 – MN Paid Leave Policy was then presented, including the Policy Purpose, General Statement of Policy, definitions, notification requirements, status reports, applying for MPL benefits, bonding leave, disability benefits, sick leave, and “top off payments”, benefits during MPL, return to work, funding during PML, coordination with other leaves, employment restrictions during MPL, and prohibited retaliation

The full presentation and draft of the proposed policy revisions can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Franco noted appreciation for the thorough conversation and detail on the law. He also appreciated the note that it has been brought before bargaining groups.
- On slide 29, about the status reports, help to understand the cadence for those? With the expected return date, and what is the cadence to expect them to report if it is the plan. Response: We expect to be informed right away, and many times it does not happen. Many times we find out the day before or the day of that the staff member is not coming back.
 - If the leave is changing, we expect them to communicate it with due time. We want to know as soon as possible, depending on the length of the leave and to find a new staff member, and the sooner information, the more we can prepare to provide continuity of instruction to students.
 - He noted the current language and the first part reads as “even if still coming back, report that still coming back” and sending updated leave, those feel like only need to give the update if changing. Response: That is the intent. It may be helpful to state “if leave is changing, we expect this...”
- Director Carrillo asked questions about the current stage of life many educators and elderly parents or family members, that leave may change from intermittent to continuous. In those situations, what is the understanding with situations covered with notification to happen in a timeframe? Some changes can happen quickly. Response: It is covered by the policy. Ideally we’d like to know 30 days in

advance, and within the timeframe practicable and as soon as they know, and also time for documentation. They could notify us in advance and that they are getting the necessary framework. We send the paperwork and start the process. Notification expected within a reasonable time.

- Director Vue appreciated bringing this forward to the Board, and impacts to the organization. This is an administration-laden policy. He asked the Board to think about similar language that the Superintendent or designee shall determine procedures to ensure employees are informed. We need to designate the Superintendent to oversee this policy and this practice. It is not something the Board can do – to designate the Superintendent.
- Director Carrillo noted a clarification in speaking about the policy regarding what constitutes an emergency, and understand this qualifies as an emergency to ensure consistent with organization's employees that we have this policy in prior to December 1. The three-reading process would push it to February, and a 3-month delay from the need. We discussed earlier what constitutes an emergency, and if the Policy Work Group agreed that it is an emergency. Response: Director Franco noted that because of the statutory requirement, it gives the standing to move quickly. For the sake of employees to understand and refer back to with the roll-out, it is important to have it adopted in sync with that.
- The Board agreed to move this forward to the expedited process at the next Regular Meeting.

e. Fleet Vehicle Driver Procedure

Pat Pratt-Cook, Executive Chief of Human Resources, then presented this item. Background included that Administrative Procedures are not typically reviewed by the board; these procedures are being shared for Board awareness of the changes being implemented; and procedural changes are to ensure compliance with district insurance carrier requirements.

Insurance carrier expectations were presented, including the change in insurance carrier expectations, and enforcement of industry standards.

The next part of the presentation was the purpose, authorized drivers, and motor vehicle records. Information was provided on the purpose of the Fleet Vehicle Driver procedure, authorized district drivers, Motor Vehicle Records (MVR) review, and important clarifications on MVR status.

Details were also shared on driving violation definitions and MVR categories, including moving violations, minor violations, major violations, and at-fault accidents, in the categories of clear, acceptable, borderline, and unacceptable. Further information on each was also provided, as well as areas that are not considered a violation.

Consequences were reviewed, including potential consequences for employees, major violations that are borderline status, and major violations that are unacceptable status.

Employee's reporting expectations were also shared, including reporting of driving violation or vehicle damage, and violations while operating personal vehicles.

The disciplinary procedure was also reviewed.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Vue noted it is procedural, and not required for board approval, what is the timeline? Response: We will be rolling this out the week of November 24th to all employees, and meeting with the bargaining units the week of November 17th.
- How often will the insurance carrier report back to the district the status of driver, whether they are unacceptable or borderline? Response: We do it ourselves, and it is done minimally once a year. It could potentially result in follow-up action, but would really have it if something happened and it wasn't reported. The employee has a responsibility to do self-reporting.
- Director Franco noted that if there are employees in an unacceptable or borderline category and meeting with them, or moving from one category to another – is the insurance company, do they

have training materials or others to provide to employees? Refreshers and trainings may be helpful from the employer. Response: If someone moved into the borderline category, they will be required to participate in training, provided by the insurance carrier. We have spoken with the broker about training to develop ourselves in collaboration with the broker and insurance carrier, in the event we change carriers, for a resource. It is available, but also exploring developing it ourselves.

- It will be helpful as we move to this hard-pivot to this new protocol that is in alignment with industry standards, but new to employees.
- He also noted comment and interested in knowing more about the amount of minor violation, and is it taking to move from one category to another, and minor violations are going to be ones in which they are connected to profiling, especially racial profiling. He fears we may end up perpetuating this cycle of harming folks. Response: It is a complex matrix, but it can be shared, but the level of violations were also considered.
- He also noted it may be worth looking into with a full breadth of understanding of the matrix, and a supplementary policy with a points system to be assigned points to keep a tracker, and reporting in real time, and predictable for folks to understand and provide the matrix possible, with a supplemental documentation. Response: The matrix will be in the procedure, and will be doing training to ensure employees understand it. The City is self-insured, but we are not as a district, and the insurer will insure based on the standard. Borderline will require training, and there is a timeframe. It will be critical for the employee to be rigid in their driving standards. Because we are not self-insured, there is not the flexibility. Proactive efforts to have those who are borderline to ensure they know so they do not lose their jobs.

5. CONTRACT FOR STUDY OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

Director Henderson presented this item, and noted that the Board is not voting on this item, but it is a conversation, it's an impactful conversation. She also noted that the proposal will be added to the BoardBook, and will be included in the upcoming Regular Meeting. She shared the background around the engagement in this type of contract. It's important that we asked taxpayers for a significant referendum, and the budget deficit, with the impacts to this point. There have also been conversations about alluded to charter school and market share. We have not been able to have a clear and concise information to understand the impacts on market share and on the financial impacts on our district. To be the fiscal stewards, we need to have all the information. This is a study – not the ability to make decisions that would be held purview of city or state – but to understand the impacts, and one step to gain it. The proposal that allows us to go back in time and start to map out how have charter schools as another entity in our city impacts the district financially, collect data from the state with billing of services obligated to provide, and understand and follow funding from students as they shift in and out of district. These are important pieces to understand factors to today, and how does the information lead into and live in collective decision making.

The full draft contract can be found in the BoardBook.

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:

- Director Ward noted back to as an undergraduate student studying political science and policy-making process and steps. The very first charters opened in Saint Paul, and an educational experiment in structuring our educational system, and if having multiple systems is beneficial, or caused negative effects on other systems also educating students. There have been conversations about effects of charters on the district, and some is speculative or anecdotal, and it makes sense to have a formal assessment to be more grounded in conversations.
- Director Carrillo echoed the same expectation, and ability to understand some of the questions asking here in this and the request is to delivering a report to detail the methodology and the findings from the research questions, and finding the impacts, including on billing for special education, transportation and counseling, and net effect of student moving to charters and funding that represents in the impact. He also noted caveats and context framework – there are many impacts to enrollment in SPPS, but also a point of conversation to research it. The same that we have done deep dives into demographics and hired a demographer to see potential enrollment in 10-15 years, and is good due diligence of the impacts of charters on the public education system. Another question is this study has been done in other districts in Minnesota or the nation.

Response: It has not been done in the state, but in Los Angeles. Charter laws are created by states, so they vary. Studies in other states are not entirely applicable to our situation.

- The idea of pioneering this in Minnesota is important, and encourages other districts to do the same. There are political taboos that asking questions about relationship with charters and impacts on educational system and city is valid, and need to understand the impacts and further discussions are going to be grounded in data, and research. Hopefully it spawns other research that elicits more data, and a burgeoning area of research for demographer community. He is in agreement with this.
- Director Vue noted questions on the cost, and if it is negotiable. Response: It is fairly locked-in with the range. It is considering the time and task.
- Upon completion, who owns the data? SPPS or the research team? Response: It is public data.
- He notes that the firm would like to publicize it, and would they need approval by SPPS before that step? Response: If it is a report we own, it is public data, and would be available to the public. General Counsel noted further discussion on the intellectual property and public data.
- Director Vue noted it is informational study, that does not inform us what to do? Response: We do not have the ability to make decisions for zoning. But collecting information for our own ability to understand the impacts, and to be public and all.
- Director Valliant noted questions about a line discussing funding, and the wording of the contract and sounds strangely accusatory. In addition to understanding the information, and points of intentionality around the use of the information, and actions that could be taken with it. Response: There are other organizations interested in this information, including Special Education Bleu Ribbon Commission, and reductions of \$250M over the next biennium, and look at all aspects with funding would be beneficial. To have it specific for SPPS instead of the larger districts it could be beneficial, and for public understanding and impacts to SPPS in these areas. If reporting, sharing, community is well-informed, there are many options for how it can be used, and we have no control over charter schools in the city, but to have that knowledge.
- Director Allen thanked the team and this is an issue that our community is not aware of and the impacts to the budget. It will be very eye-opening in recognizing why we fall into deficits and missing parts of educational system that cannot be filled. She is excited to see the information, and hopes to use it to make smarter economic decisions moving forward. Director Henderson noted community education and the different mechanism and impacts to our budgeting, and this is a mechanism where we need information.
- Director Henderson noted the plan to be on the next consent agenda, and if further discussion and questions on the language in the proposal, and board members have the ability to pull it from the consent agenda. It feels like the right moment after asking large ask from taxpayers and to understand each impact.
- Director Franco made a point like all contracting in the district, this would also go before General Counsel for questions to be clarified as common practice.
- What is the duration anticipated - December 1, 2025 to April 30, 2026. It is a short timeline. That start date is determined by the finalization of the contract. Services and work cannot be provided prior to the finalization.

7. ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 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:
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