

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

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

**March 3, 2026  
4:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. by Vice Chair Valliant.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Board of Education: E. Valliant, C. Franco, Y. Carrillo, C. Allen

Staff: K. Bergstrom, S. Dahlke

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

**MOTION:** Director Valliant moved to approve the other of the main agenda. The motion was seconded by Director Allen. It passed by acclaim.

**4. MOTION TO SCHEDULE A SPECIAL MEETING ON MARCH 10, 2026 FOR THE PURPOSE OF BOARD VACANCY INTERVIEWS AND ACTION ON RESOLUTION**

**MOTION:** Director Valliant moved to confirm the date of the special meeting for the purpose of board vacancy interviews and action on a resolution for Tuesday, March 10th 2026, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the conference rooms A and B of the District Office at 360 Colborne. The motion was seconded by Director Carrillo. It passed by acclaim.

There was also discussion around that Director Allen will be absent from this meeting, options for board members to join virtually, and quorum needed for the meeting.

**5. RESOLUTION REGARDING FACILITIES PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND PLAN**

General Counsel Bergstrom and Chief Turner then reviewed this item. Ms. Bergstrom noted that this resolution follows the presentation from November 2025 where there was information about the facilities portfolio review. There was then another presentation with information on the reductions in our

enrollment population due to birth rates and others. This is the first draft in coordination with the presentation in November 2025, and sets the timeline. She reviewed the recommendations to the Board to act in Summer 2027 for School Year 2028-29. The intent is to vote on this at the next Regular Meeting.

Director Carrillo noted questions about the date for the FPR results to be presented to the Board, and if it was open-ended for a purpose, or if we need to state it. Response: It would be easy to add that because it can be pulled from the previous presentation. Director Carrillo noted that it could bring accountability to the timeline, and the deadline for action by 2028-2029 school year, and 2027-28 is when we are making the decision, and robust discussion and engagement. We should consider some time that the superintendent feels comfortable with the presentation.

Director Franco noted that in the resolution with engagement with the community, and additional context, as the previous presentation represented groups, but it may be helpful for avenues for engagement, in addition to others. Response: There is a statute that governs the involvement of community, and the ideas from the previous presentation were more robust. Dr. Stanley has shared her expectations and the review will mirror the strategic plan process, with an internal working group, task force, and action teams that will support this work.

Director Franco also noted a word that could take on a lot of meaning, and clear understanding of “transformation.” That has been clearly communicated, and transformation can be all-encompassing, and some connotation about what it means to transform schools, and a result of that, and to explain and ensure there is no preconceived plan about what will emerge as a transformational opportunity. Some conversations will be difficult, and mixed with bright spots as well.

Director Allen noted the need for data. Response: General Counsel noted the last Whereas statement that that some identified existing schools must be repurposed consolidated, and or closed. If transformation means more than that, there may be other ways to describe that.

Director Franco noted the possibilities, but not something that we’re saying needs to happen, but will be based on the data. The plain language is important.

Director Carrillo noted the potential of disposing of assets, and real estate, and if that would be part of the criteria, and will be part of the data and analysis. There was then further discussion if the words “repurposed”, “consolidated”, “closed”, “sold”, or “disposed of” would be added. Director Carrillo noted that it’s a possibility, and it’s right to include that as a possibility. These may be conversations that the working group and task force discuss, and knowing the priorities, and decision matrix that will benefit our students, but some will be traumatic, and how to do that in a way that is transparent. We need to be clear about the possibilities of closing schools or selling the real estate.

Director Valliant noted concerns for the students who will be in the schools when this starts, and other events that they have endured – this could be traumatic for them, on top of all the other traumatic events in the lifespans, and ways to be mindful of that as we move forward in this work. Response: That could be incorporated into the expectations for Administration, work group, task force, and others – not necessarily in the resolution, but incorporated into the expectations from the Board.

## **6. SPPS 2033 STRATEGIC PLAN**

Dr. Stacey Gray Akyea then presented this report.

She provided details about the process, including the engagement, structure, equity, and student voice. She also noted the highlights of the process including details on the Advisory Taskforce, the website, virtual engagements, and S.O.A.R. analysis of nine key topics.

**QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Director Allen noted appreciation for the student voice and equity focus. She noted the need for the voice of the paraprofessionals, who are very close to our students, and while they may be included in the Staff group, with the amount of paraprofessionals in the district, it seems like we should be intentional to gather information from them.
- She also noted questions about the attendance and ways to mitigate that. Response: For the task force, the attendance has been incredible. For the virtual engagement, there were low numbers, which may have been a result of the events in the community, including ICE, which led to the move to virtual engagement. We do have plans to ensure we have that voice, and one of the ways is through leadership facilitated engagement, and reaching out to our networks and community voices. We will also engage our PACs, and work of principals on special assignment, as well as our Office of Family Engagement.

**7. POLICY UPDATE**

a. FIRST READING: Rescission of Policy 601.01: Achievement

Craig Anderson, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, then provided the rationale for the proposed rescission of this policy. Language from this current policy will be combined with the proposed revisions to Policy 601.00 – Educational Programming and Achievement.

The full presentation and draft rescission can be found in the BoardBook.

**QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- None

**MOTION: Director Valliant moved that the presentation of the proposed Rescission of Policy 601.01: Achievement at the March 3, 2026 Committee of the Board meeting be considered the First Reading of the three reading process, and that the review of the policy at the March 17, 2026 Board of Education meeting will be considered the Second Reading. Director Franco seconded the motion.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

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

b. FIRST READING: Policy 601.00: Educational Programming and Achievement

Mr. Anderson also reviewed the proposed changes, including the Policy Purpose, General Statement of Policy, updated definitions, updated language on Academic Standards, Educational Program, Graduation Requirements, and addition of language from the Achievement policy 601.01.

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

**QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Director Allen noted she hears the voice of parents, taxpayers, students, teachers, and questions about achievement and responses to demonstrate our commitment.
- Director Franco noted questions about the graduation requirements, and if there's a chance that a different strategy might be implored to make the policy a little more generalized, or would there be a revision if there is a new best practice adopted? Response: It is more spelled out in procedure, and the 8 classes per quarter, could be removed, and the procedure would be updated.
  - Director Franco noted the call out that if operating in conflict of policy, and wanting to be in compliance, and the policy is written with flexibility, or written in a way that we adhere. Response: We are looking at policies at a feverish pace, and a cycle of refresh that is much quicker, and we should be able to be more nimble, but there may be programs outside this policy. Administration also noted that if they were to shift to a new best practice and make a substantial shift, the policy would be rewritten.
- Director Franco also noted interest in Academic Standards, and those key performance measures from the committee will be helpful. They probably come before us in other ways, and interest in that work and monitoring of the Academic Standards Implementation Committee.
- Director Carrillo noted questions under Subsection 4 in Achievement, he sought clarification on the formatting of Subsection 4 regarding student achievement. They questioned how the remaining text would be structured following the removal of previous items—specifically whether the remaining paragraphs would be relabeled as "A" and "B" to maintain the document's logical flow. Administration confirmed this formatting change would be implemented for the next reading.
- Director Valliant then noted questions about civic readiness, and how to define this. Response: In the proposed new language, it is D under definitions. The reason it is called out as a definition because it is part of the policy purpose, and a place to reference. The purpose of the policy is to have it aligned to creating comprehensive achievement and civic readiness, civic readiness for all students, and then we define that in D, and it's a new concept in the policy, and is defined by the Minnesota School Board Association. Minnesota statute states that the job of educators is to create comprehensive academic and civic readiness for students, and part of the new statute that replaced World's Best Workforce. We no longer have that language, and changed it to the same language from statute. Director Valliant noted additional discussion on this topic.
- She also noted questions about Educational Programming, and a typo that should say "district" instead of "distinct."
- She also requested further details on language within the Education Program. Response: It means the district first defines the specific skills and knowledge every student must master, then ensures that every lesson plan, textbook, and classroom activity is specifically designed to help students reach those goals. Finally, the district uses grades, report cards, and transcripts to hold students accountable, ensuring that their final marks are a true reflection of whether they have met those established standards. This language will be updated in the next reading.
- She also requested information on "instruction must be provided sometime" language within the proposed changes. Response: There are a lot of different rules in statute, including in high school. In elementary school, there needs to be exposure to arts, and deeper understanding in some of them. This allows for flexibility; for example, a student might get a broad exposure to the arts in elementary school and then choose a "deeper dive" into specific subjects later on. By directing learning toward these results over a student's entire K-12 career rather than demanding

everything every year, the district can satisfy state law while still giving students room for specialized experiences like CTE or advanced math.

- It was noted that other programs, such as community education or GED, are not spelled out in statute.
- Director Valliant requested clarification within the policy because it seems too open and variable. Proposed changes were also suggested.

**MOTION: Director Valliant moved that the presentation of the proposed updates to Policy 601.00: Educational Programming and Achievement at the March 3, 2026 Committee of the Board meeting be considered the First Reading of the three reading process, and that the review of the policy at the March 17, 2026 Board of Education meeting will be considered the Second Reading. Director Franco seconded the motion.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

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

c. FIRST READING: Policy 508.00 - Students with IEPs

Heidi Nistler, Assistant Superintendent of Specialized Services, then presented these proposed updates. Proposed changes to student-first language, a new General Statement, updated and new definitions, changes to District Responsibilities, and cross references.

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

**QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Director Franco appreciated the language around not using seclusion rooms and codifying it in policy, and the recent legislation, and this continues to codify the practices here in SPPS and that our practice will continue into the future.
- Director Carrillo requested information on the definitions included. Response: In looking at other district's policies, every other district did have those definitions, and we wonder if it may have been an update to the MSBA model policy. This policy was last revised in 2017, and for some reason those definitions were not included in our policy at the time.
- Is this language pulled from statute or MSBA model policy? Response: It is from the model policy based on statutory language, and was confirmed to be in alignment with statutes.
- Director Carrillo noted that if community asks about the definitions, there is a cross reference. Other district policies also state that this policy is based on law, and that was not included, because a lot of what we have in policy goes beyond the law, including district responsibilities, school responsibilities, and parent/guardian rights and expectations, which go beyond what is included in the law, and was not included in the MSBA policy.
- The Board also noted questions about the details of seclusion space versus a de-escalation space. Response: Seclusion space is a restrictive measure where a student is confined alone in a room (often padded) and physically barred from leaving. In contrast, a de-escalation room is a supportive environment equipped with sensory tools and soft seating; its goal is to help a student

regulate their emotions through active staff engagement, and the student is never prevented from leaving the space.

- Director Valliant requested that the language be changed from “should be structured to encourage the students to make progress in light of the student’s circumstances” to be more student-centered.
- She also noted that it may be helpful to have information about the rights of students when they turn age 18. Response: The proposed addition to the policy, specifically a new "Section 7," outlines the formal transition of educational rights from parents to students upon their 18th birthday. Under this section, the district would be held accountable for ensuring all decision-making authority shifts to the student at the age of majority. Furthermore, the policy would mandate a "one-year notice" period, requiring the school to officially notify students of this transfer at least one year before they turn 18, aligning the district's internal rules with existing state law and placing these obligations clearly under "School Responsibilities."
- Director Allen noted questions about athletes with an IEP, and how to give them a deeper understanding about how this could impact their long-term plans, and how to notify them. Response: Ms. Nistler emphasized that the transition process for students on an IEP should begin as early as 8th or 9th grade, focusing on post-secondary goals and graduation requirements. The speaker acknowledges that while these "Transition IEPs" are meant to be student-centered—prioritizing what the student actually wants for their future—it may not always be clear to the students themselves how the document supports their personal goals. To bridge this gap, the speaker suggests that the IEP team should better highlight core substitutions and the inclusion of extracurricular activities, noting that engagement in school life is a vital component of developing "independent living" skills.

**MOTION: Director Valliant moved that the presentation of the proposed updates to Policy 508.00 - Students with IEPs at the March 3, 2026 Committee of the Board meeting be considered the First Reading of the three reading process, and that the review of the policy at the March 17, 2026 Board of Education meeting will be considered the Second Reading. Director Franco seconded the motion.**

The motion was approved by roll call vote:

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

## **8. SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION TIMELINE AND UPDATE**

Board members then reviewed this update, including Phase 1 – Development of Tool, Phase II – Goals and Rubric, Phase III – Evaluation, and the ongoing evaluation timeline.

For 2026, there will be a summary presented of the evaluation at the July Regular Meeting. Director Franco recommended board members review the rubric and proposed goals.

The full presentation can be found in the BoardBook.

### **QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION:**

- Director Carrillo suggested that if there are changes, feedback should be sent earlier to have conversations about the change requested, or minor updates, as they could be entertained by the committee. Feedback including on the process will also be helpful. The action will be to adopt this evaluation tool at the March Regular Meeting.
- Director Valliant requested a list of artifacts that will be presented, so that board members can check into each for their determination and basing their evaluation on data, and as an accountability measure.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:07 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