

Board Special Meeting



2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134

Oversight Work Sessions: Highly Capable Services; Work Session: Budget; Executive Session+: Evaluate the Performance of a Public Employee
Wednesday, ~~December 14, 2016~~ February 8, 2017, 4:30-8:00pm
Auditorium, John Stanford Center

Minutes

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM. Directors Pinkham, Peters, Harris, Burke, Geary, and Patu were present. Director Blanford was absent.

Oversight Work Session: Highly Capable Services

This session was staffed by Superintendent Larry Nyland, Deputy Superintendent Stephen Neilsen, Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Michael Tolley, Chief of Student Support Services Wyeth Jessee, Supervisor of Highly Capable Services and Advanced Learning Program Stephen Martin, and Director of Student Support Services Kari Hanson.

Michael Tolley moderated. Mr. Tolley gave a brief over-view of the history of Advanced Learning. In the past it was part of Curriculum and Instruction but reorganization put it in Student Support Services with Wyeth Jessee to provide greater support to schools, students, and families, and maximize limited resources in our district. This structure allows for more collaboration and coordination. More work is necessary. Principals rate Advanced Learning as lowest rated department of that survey. This reorganization offers greater support.

Wyeth Jessee shared the Agenda, using the standard format for annual over-sight. This office has annual over-sight for Advanced Learning (AL) and Highly Capable (HC.) It is well-discussed in district. Mr. Jessee then shared the Vision, Mission, and Departmental Functions, saying we know it's important to understand each and every students' need. We need to work together in every school to do this. Advanced Learning needs support to do this. The identification process takes about 50% of the time. This year, 4937 students referred and tested. Young children are doing this. Other elements of the office responsibilities include program services. With regard to PD's: AL needs to work with other departments to make sure the children make their best growth academically and behaviorally. The need to work in collaboration with central offices and schools so we will meet mission and visions.

Wyeth Jessee explained the Organizational Chart saying an intentional decision to bring work together to coordinate and know what is going on at each school site was made. It's a very veteran group in the AL department, but they work a lot in isolation. Stephen Martin said we need to work with others to expand our work, to work with a sponsor on systems issues. Mr. Jessee went on to say we need to study critical data and define services and roles. Mr. Jessee said that Kari Hanson (former HC teacher and principal) and he do this. The AL team does an incredible job, but outcomes not where we want them...customer service and student demographics reflect a need for improvement.

Kari Hanson introduced the S.W.O.T. Analysis. Strengths—the first she highlighted is interdepartmental collaboration saying this is the opportunity to continue to grow and expand, especially in collaboration with the Department of Technology Services (DOTS.) Communication and collaboration with the Special Education department to serve twice-exceptional students, as well as the systems upgrade are areas of note. This fall, the changeover from manual data entry to the SharePoint system streamlined the processes. This releases staff to focus on other areas and needs.

Ms. Hanson continued the S.W.O.T. Analysis: Weaknesses—Have a demographic disproportionality; the impact on AL staff to do testing, means less time to support schools, the cohesiveness of collaboration is anchored in Professional Development (PD) and growth (PD plan with MTSS that targets these students). However, there's a lack of consistency and common understanding and vocabulary. These are being addressed by the action plan.

Ms. Hanson went on with the S.W.O.T. Analysis: Opportunities—we move to the opportunity to increase through the eligibility and identification; increase representation, dig into equity issue; partnering with parents and community. Put into place things that are meaningful and make sense to parents and community.

Kari Hanson completed the S.W.O.T. Analysis: Threats/Risks, citing the climate and culture piece. She asked, where are they in the schools with regard to what's happening at the schools? How well are teachers prepared to differentiate? Disproportionality clearly is a threat to perception, safety, access, and welcomeness for students.

Wyeth Jessee continued, addressing Board Concerns and Status, reviewing things discussed in October, but also providing an update since that time. Mr. Jessee highlighted things we are well-on in addressing, including: Disparity in enrollment and Identification and eligibility practices. Equitable access—looking at how to address by working with parent group we have discussed a number of ways to address, including info sessions (with help of parents) to encourage families to consider HC programs; opportunities for test prep, translation of documents and “hand-holding,” personalized service, connection, response, and outreach. Customer service.

Wyeth Jessee wants to make sure everything is clearly communicated and “enlightened”. He wants the team to level up outreach (making a phone call instead of writing an email, for example.) He wants to make sure that students needs are addressed. He attended a Twice Exceptional (2e) meeting at Cascadia (with families from across the district) with 40 parents in January and will be going back. There is also a newer group we want to partner with. He pointed out that these are examples of stake-holder engagement. Mr. Jessee acknowledged that, in the past, there's been a disconnect “on the ground” with principals, as well as a lack of consistency across the district. Lacking this has created the issues we have today.

Wyeth Jessee then said the questions now include, with regard to AL, what are we, what do we offer, how do we access this? We need to provide clear and timely info to directors. The work project will address the definition and structure of program. Pathways and boundaries impact our work and decisions—we need to plan out this year, next year, and years ahead. We have doubled the number of HC eligible kids in 4 years (2000 to 4000). Historically, there's been a lack of clear and reliable data. Transparency. There are two work projects (AL and HC). There is an issue of different opinions of how to deal with issues. We need to work as a team with all partners to go forward.

Director Patu asked about doing a follow up to see where we are. She said that it's great that identifying, eligibility, and identification are being considered. Dir. Patu asked what are some of the

things AL is actually doing to up these numbers? Mr. Wyeth responded, saying there must be a standardized process, that unless we make agreements and are transparent, we can't make a change. It's an issue that we are doing this (and is required by WACs) but the team is also addressing this issue (for example, but attending the UW Equity Summit tomorrow). To look at this, he said, we are not the only district trying to take this on. We want to make sure what we do is done well and consistently. We are starting with outreach to agencies and groups. We want to receive referrals (recommendations) not just from parents and educators, but also members of the community.

Dir. Patu said that's great but wondered what kinds of tests AL is actually using and if those tests are equitable. She went on to say that we've been talking about this for quite a while. She said it's hard, but her concern is what are we going to do as a district to make sure we are going to qualify more students of color? That's the question I'm always asking. She then said she noticed you don't got no American Indian or Pacific Islander students. She noticed zeroes all the way through. I want to look at those two particular groups to know how we can get these kids so they get tested.

Mr. Tolley and Mr. Jessee explained that the data can only show amounts greater than ten in situations where those numbers could be specifically identifiable.

Director Pinkham pointed out that he saw numbers <10 in other places, so wondered why isn't the actual number being used for American Indians and Pacific Islanders? Mr. Jessee agreed and said he would address this discrepancy. Stephen Martin said that Policies and Procedures outline cognitive abilities and achievement in reading and math along with a Teacher Rating Scale and a Parent Rating Scale. He explained that scores have been set at 98% for cognitive and 95% for reading and math achievement for Highly Capable eligibility. For Spectrum/AL, it is 87% for all. Those are not hard numbers but are the goals. The Multidisciplinary Selection Committee (MSC) has the authority to make decisions that allow variance. But, we are charged with finding the "most highly capable."

Wyeth Jessee mentioned that programs like the Rainier Scholars and the testing of all 2nd graders in Title 1(T1) schools have been ways the Advanced Learning department has reached out.

Director Harris told Mr. Jessee to tell us about "the super secret MSC". She wanted to know much time is spent on each student, how much experience do the members of the team have, and how much focus is on creativity?

Stephen Martin responded by mentioning that the make-up of the MSC is required by the WAC. The four members of the Advanced Learning office on the chart work not in secret, but they are dealing with confidential information (student data and test scores). They have been meeting for weeks, and consider not just test scores but also whether a student is ELL, has another language they speak or use at home...decisions are made with all data. Some are very quick but if there is a discussion or disagreement, it can be rich and or pointed (especially as the MSC considers second languages and ELL students. They look at score growth and rapid language acquisition). We look at former scores to see if a score is an anomaly. It is labor-intensive but is required by law.

Director Harris asked how we catch the 2e kids? Mr. Martin responded that Special Education services are noted in the data and are also considered. Mr. Martin explained that "referral" is now a formal term. In order for a student to be tested, the WAC says a parent/guardian must sign permission. We can have others recommend students. A random person can't refer but can recommend.

Dir. Pinkham asked if he could recommend all American Indians get tested. Mr. Martin replied that we'd love to have community outreach. We go to schools and present. Dir. Pinkham asked if we could test all students. Mr. Martin explained that achievement and cognitive abilities are closely linked, but we currently have about 5000 referred and the district has 53,000! We are using MAP and SBA data, but it would be a lot more testing.

Dir. Pinkham asked if the listed "*" showing an amount less than 10 students (<10) is district-wide or just representative of those referred. Director Peters commented that the Advanced Learning department is stretched by testing at the expense of professional development and outreach and asked how can the board help the department in testing? Looking at the numbers, how many tested, how many eligible...is there a way to make it simpler?

Stephen Martin said the department used to look at achievement first and any students who scores 87% or above was invited to test. Recently, things changed so that anyone who is referred may be tested since potential should come before achievement. So, in the last 3-4 years, have tested all who are referred. The amount of testing is disproportionate. He's not sure the district is seeing a pay-off for that effort. Also, it exposes children to a stressful event. Parents don't necessarily have a strong feeling for where their kids are so they say, "Why not?" The full CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) is three hours. This is why kindergarten through second grade students now do a screener and those who score at or above 94% are invited to take the full CogAT.

Director Peters said that referrals seem to be the start of the pattern. What is it we need to teach teachers, principals, parents about who should be referred? We over-test some but under-identify others. What do you need to bring results we all want?

Mr. Wyeth said he really appreciated that comment and it is definitely where we are going, thoughtfully. For example, he said, switching the order of the cognitive and the achievement tests. How does this work with equity? The rest of the country identifies 1-2%. While we can celebrate that the number of Hispanics is growing, that is shadowed by the white group growing even bigger. This is not going to be easy.

Director Harris asked if it could be many test for Highly Capable because they don't recognize Spectrum since we don't differentiate and meet the needs of their students? Is it why so many are going to private schools? Mr. Jessee said that, yes, that may be why people are doing what they are doing and yes, we do have inconsistencies. He said he wouldn't disagree. With regard to private schools, he commented that our district is growing.

Mr. Martin said that 300-400 apply from private schools each year, hoping to attend Seattle Schools. Director Geary wondered if we plan to include students, especially high school students, in the community outreach as they are smart and eloquent and can address their experiences and the impact as well as a way to meet broader needs.

Mr. Martin said we have begun developing a questionnaire. Mr. Jessee brought the conversation back to the agenda. Wyeth Jessee introduced the idea of Board Concerns and Status.

Director Burke mentioned that the last item on the list is the most important to the board and is guiding a lot of the work. Mr. Jessee said a lot of work for systemic changes and to reflect wants and needs.

Wyeth Jessee addressed Eligibility and Appeals Data. Mr. Jessee said there is a lot of work to be done for systemic changes and to reflect wants and needs. Many are eligible but not currently enrolled

in HCC or Spectrum as many choose to stay at their current school. With Spectrum, there is not as great a disparity, but it still exists.

Mr. Jessee went on to say that appeals are a hot topic. Appeals seem to be one of the bigger issues, part of policies and procedures (and required by law) but they support inequities and grow them.

Stephen Martin addressed Department Accomplishments. The accomplishments include the eligibility notifications prior to the end of Open Enrollment on February 24. The CPI (for OSPI) had no findings and gave a commendation for the T1 second grade universal testing. AL is providing Culturally Responsive Teaching for professional development this year.

Stephen Martin continued with the Department Goals, Objectives, and Key Performance Indicators Identification. He said the target is 90% by February 10. By today, we had 88% (we learned it was actually 94% at the time of this meeting). Diversity is very important and also very difficult. The goal is to move that by 1%. Professional Developments are offered monthly and as requested. Support is also offered through phone calls, meetings (with BLTs, staffs, and PTAs). Of the staffing and budget, 39% remains, which will support Early Entrance to Kindergarten (EEK,) Title 1 (T1) 2nd grade testing, and systems improvement.

Wyeth Jessee referenced district Policies and Procedures are as outlined on the slide. He asked the group to note the revisions and growth in two years.

Mr. Jessee continued with Internal and External Controls and mentioned that over-sight is very important. He said we need to broaden where and how we connect with schools by gathering information and communication. Those things feed our conversation (what is happening, how do we know, how do we define, etc.).

Stephen Martin shared the Major Outside Service Contracts that includes identification (testing, hourly people to proctor tests, project management to keep our technology system on-track). Mr. Martin addressed information also elaborated the Technology Systems as shown on the slide. He said on Friday, all the information is uploading.

Kari Hanson addressed Looking Forward/Next Steps, said she wanted to highlight the Advanced Learning staff, they will all have the REAT training; the project plan is to work with research and development, including work with the parent group from Thurgood Marshall. There will be student voice in the action plan. There will be co-led PD's. The last couple of summers there has been a summit, which will include the Advanced Learning team and is fueled by the inquiry process. Already, there have been meetings with Mr. Jessee, Mr. Tolley, and the Thurgood Marshall group to organize and create a team. The team will formalize engagement, streamline, and move forward. Outreach to schools will happen. When students are identified and become eligible, AL will address how students are enrolled and include the families so the students don't drop out. It will be collaborative.

Ms. Hanson went on to say there will be continued upgrades. MTSS will be accessed and used through the data portal which will give needed information. The Advanced Learning department needs online scheduling and the ability to collect fees online. We are at the third level of this work. She asked, can we get our Advanced Learning team into schools? We continue to study Thurgood Marshall to see what's happening and is it working? How will we know if it is working? If it is not working, how do we shift the work?

Director Geary asked about slide 12 regarding appeals. She didn't see that category pulled and they need to be shown. In reference to slide 16, she asked the presenters to tell more about the professional developments and types. She also said that when slide 22 was shown she didn't hear about the community engagement tool. Director Peters remarked on appeals saying, in the information she got, there were 570 students who became HC eligible in 2015 and that half of those got in through appeals. Mr. Jessee responded that that was correct. Director Peters then asked, if Mr. Jessee believed getting rid of appeals will solve the disparity? Mr. Jessee said no. He said the law requires appeals, but that we should investigate as a board.

Director Peters asked why. She went on to say that 479 appealed, 236 were successful, but said these numbers prove it's a lie that a person can "buy your way in." She said the appeals data mirrors the program so if appeals are gone the numbers would be smaller but still the same disparity. She said we lack a critical mass of color so many don't go [to an HCC]. She said we need to direct resources away from testing but change so the numbers reflect the district better. Dir. Peters also wanted to know how the new Thurgood Marshall committee is different than HSAC?

Ms. Hanson responded that the group has risen from the community and we should capitalize on their work. The district will examine the work and it will be an enhancement to the work or they may work alongside HSEC. First, the district wanted to determine the level of commitment. They wouldn't disband [HSEC] but will look at how they can work together.

Director Peters stated there have been multiple task forces. She then asked if AL is looking at them? New people look with new eyes. She said we shouldn't start over.

Ms. Hanson said she has seen the 2007 Virginia study and has gathered the emails since the beginning of the year to be studied. She also said the Virginia study is interesting as the issues and concerns continue. They should be married to the current concerns. Mr. Tolley said that enrollment and planning considers task-force work.

Dir. Peters said that the Office of Advanced Learning provides professional development on-demand, but that she would like the office to be more proactive. She went on to say that new teachers and principals begin and many not know what was taught before. There are many without buy-in and we need to train them.

Mr. Martin said the team met today with as part of the MTSS leads. Every school will have an MTSS team and Advanced Learning will be part of that team offering district-wide professional developments. It will be more systematic. Director Peters followed up with a question to Mr. Tolley asking what the HCC curriculum is.

Mr. Tolley responded that when the program was APP, it was two years advanced. He went on to explain that that has changed as the district moves to the Washington State standards (College and Career Readiness) but that it is still accelerated. Director Geary said she is not as inclined to stop looking at appeals saying, the mirroring of a program and proportions growing greater are still an issue. A self-contained program is inequitable. She said appeals are growing the problem faster. Director Pinkham followed by looking at the demographic breakdowns and noting that "multi-racial" does not offer the level of difference we need to be able to see the "real" groups. Director Burke referenced the next steps, wondering about the outreach to schools and asking if there are any non-negotiables. Dir. Burke wondered if there is an expectation of Advanced Learning being part of the CSIPs? At the building level, what should anyone expect anywhere?

Mr. Jessee responded that he was glad this came up. He is wondering who is using what language and where. The non-negotiables is diverse MTSS teams at every school asking where are students needing more growth and how are we directing our services to support that, including Advanced Learners and Highly Capable students. The schools must show actions.

Director Burke followed up asking if “growth” is a way of saying ALL students? Director Harris said that, four years ago, Chief Sealth started blending honors and she has asked for data. She went on to say that we should have rich data [from Chief Sealth.]

Mr. Jessee said that he would take responsibility for that data personally. Mr. Tolley thanked the group for coming.

This session ended at 5:53 pm.

Work Session: Budget

This session was staffed by Superintendent Larry Nyland, Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen, and Assistant Superintendent JoLynn Berge.

Assistant Superintendent JoLynn Berge summarized the agenda for the Budget Work Session and the outcome for the meeting. Ms. Berge reviewed the FY2017-18 Budget Development Calendar. Ms. Berge handed out an additional information and reviewed the 2017-18 Revenue Estimates. Ms. Berge explained the legislative plans she is speaking about currently has given start in 2018-19 and does not effect 2017-18.

Ms. Berge reviewed the comparison of 2017 legislative session K-12 education funding proposals that included House Bill 1843 and Senate Bill 5607. Directors discussed if there is a bill that did not require teachers to be certified. Director Peters asked about lobbying being done that may or may not be on the same page as Seattle. Ms. Berge explained that how the data sets used came to light and possibly not a lot of people are aware of this. Deputy Superintendent Nielsen spoke about how on his own time as a citizen, he has spoken with some people and they are not aware that the bill does not help students.

Mr. Nielsen explained the Bills, in his opinion, would not meet accountability based on the constitution. Director Patu asked how much money would be lost based on our attendance. Ms. Berge explained she does not have that information currently. Director Burke asked if transportation is embedded in this plan and is a discussion worth having. Mr. Nielsen explained our hope is to raise the issues with other districts to engage legislators. Director Peters asked if the per pupil funding is something we use to do, and why do we no longer do that. Ms. Berge explained that previously the formula was not transparent enough and updated to be more like the prototypical model.

Ms. Berge spoke about the analysis that is being done currently for the \$2M. Director Peters asked for additional information on equity tiering. Ms. Berge spoke about how this is to allow the Directors an opportunity to see if they agree with the overview of how to allocate the \$2M. She also explained we have to wait for open enrollment to run the formula to see how it will actually play out.

Directors asked if we are expecting our enrollment projections to be more or less than this year. Mr. Nielsen explained the projections have not been completed, we do think they will be slightly more based on beginning projections, but the slope is flattening out.

Ms. Berge explained the options available for a restoration plan. Mr. Nielsen spoke about based on speculation we could get \$35-\$40M from the legislature in a good scenario. He added on the other side in a bad scenario we may only receive \$5M-10M.

Ms. Berge explained on slide 15 the possible scenarios given are for a restoration plan. She explained on February 28th once this plan is released all the directors will be getting calls and will need to consider what they are being asked for. Ms. Berge opened it up for initial feedback on the restoration plan.

Director Burke spoke about how he would prefer to resort targeted mitigation funds and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) with improved outcomes for students.
Director Patu would like additional time to think about her decision.

Director Harris asked are we still looking at sixteen Assistant Principals and do they have bumping rights. Ms. Berge explained it is currently 26 assistant principals. Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Clover Codd explained when assistant principals are displaced they will go into a displaced pool. Then Reduction in Force's (RIF) will come into play because of the bargaining agreements. They will not have bumping rights to be a teacher, this is based on the bargaining agreements.

Mr. Nielsen explained when we lose people they could go to other districts this is where we are vulnerable and he is worried about that for the long term. Director Peters asked about the difference between economic reserve and the contingency funds. Ms. Berge explained the contingency fund is split between central office and schools and the economic reserve fund is something we will take a multi-year approach when trying to restore that.

Director Harris asked what would happen if we have an earthquake. Mr. Nielsen explained if we have an earthquake, we will assess the situation and will be able to ask for Federal assistance if needed.

Director Harris asked how we are using our community engagement tools. Ms. Berge explained the \$2M would be implemented and what the fiscal impact on February 28th. People will not like it, but it will be fair and an equity lens will have been used.

Ms. Codd explained the phases that will occur for displaced employees. Ms. Berge summarized the follow up plan after today and at the next Budget work session on March 29th.

This meeting recessed at 7:32 pm.

Executive Session*: Evaluate the Performance of a Public Employee

Director Peters called the executive session to order at 7:32 pm.

Directors Burke, Harris, Geary, Patu, Peters and Pinkham were present.

Staff present were Superintendent Larry Nyland, Deputy Superintendent Stephen Neilsen, Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Michael Tolley, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Clover Codd, Executive Director of Labor & Employee Relations Stan Damas, and General Counsel John Cerqui

Director Patu left at 7:36 pm.

At 8:01 pm, Director Peters announced that the executive session to evaluate the performance of a public employee was now expected to go an additional 15 minutes, with an anticipated end time of 8:17pm.

At 8:17 pm, Director Peters announced that the executive session to evaluate the performance of a public employee was now expected to go an additional 10 minutes, with an anticipated end time of 8:27pm.

At 8:27 pm, Director Peters recessed out of the executive session.

Adjourn

The Special Meeting reconvened at 8:28 pm, and there being no further business to come before the Board, Director Peters adjourned the special meeting at 8:28 pm.