



Seattle School Board Retreat

Saturday, December 3, 2016 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Auditorium, John Stanford Center

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 am. Directors Blanford, Burke, Geary, Harris, Patu, and Pinkham were present. Director Peters arrived at 10:07 am. Staff present was Superintendent Larry Nyland, Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen, General Counsel Noel Treat, Associate Superintendent for Teaching & Learning Michael Tolley, Associate Superintendent for Facilities & Operations Flip Herndon, Assistant Superintendent for Operations Pegi McEvoy, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Clover Codd, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance JoLynn Berge, Chief Partnership Officer Brent Jones, Chief Engagement Officer Carri Campbell, Chief of Schools Mike Starosky, Chief of Student Supports Wyeth Jessee, Chief of Curriculum, Assessment & Instruction Kyle Kinoshita, Executive Director of Government Relations & Strategic Initiatives Erinn Bennett, Director of Policy & Board Relations Nate Van Duzer, Director of School-Family Partnerships and Race & Equity Bernardo Ruiz, and Board Office Manager Theresa Hale.

Director Patu opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their support during her term as Board President.

BUDGET

JoLynn Berge opened the discussion and noted how the conversation would go, reviewing the agenda for this section. Stephen Nielsen called for a round of applause for Director Patu and her leadership. He then spoke about the objective for today, working towards a positive resolution. Staff will be working towards building a "worst case scenario" budget and he noted the need to emphasize the issues ahead of time to be sure it remains top of mind. He noted the Public Hearing for the Board and how the Board listens to those opinions, but it is critical to have a full picture to make sure opinions based on the full scope of the situation are considered.

Ms. Berge noted the update at the November 22 work session on the total projected deficit, which grew to \$74M. She reviewed the agreed upon items to bring down the deficit, leaving around \$44.5M. She then reviewed the timeline for this work with the worst case scenario decisions being addressed at the January 11th work session. She spoke to the work of the Weighted Staffing Standards (WSS) task force and Director Harris asked if the WSS will address high needs schools, which Ms. Berge noted will be a part of one of today's proposals. Ms. Berge spoke about possible staffing reductions and how that is considered within the work. Ms. Berge spoke about the timing for the legislature to address the *McCleary* decision, which has now been noted to need to be addressed by the 2018-19 year. Director Peters asked how that was called out and Ms. Berge noted the State Supreme Court had been asked for clarification and told the legislature it was the 18-19 year. Supt. Nyland spoke about communications sent to all staff this week to start the process to be sure they hear it 4 times, to be sure the message is received. He noted his next communique may need to be updated to adjust the framing of the legislature on this issue. He also noted the legislature will be doing a budget for the next two years so this will be a longer session, and will need to show the Supreme Court what is there for the second year of the biennium. He spoke about the levy funding that has been taken away from the district after it was approved by the voters, and this will be a pain point as we move forward. Mr. Nielsen, noting a KOMO interview, said he was asked if we were posturing and he had stated that we are on the same budget cycle as always and that these are very real problems that will affect us.

Ms. Berge noted that the legislature will likely not come to a budget decision until the end of June and while there may be some compensation dollars, it may not be enough. They are hearing positive

things about the Governor's budget and how they understand the issue. Dir. Harris asked to go into depth on the Governor's budget, and also how the state department may be ratcheting back. Ms. Berge noted this is all speculation on the Governor's budget, which will likely be released around December 15, and will likely include a compensation increase for new teachers which will help lift compensation for all teachers. She noted how the actions of the legislature hasn't matched their promises. Dir. Blanford asked about revenue forecast from October, with another one coming in March. Ms. Berge noted that a law could be passed to say if the legislature doesn't get to action on the budget in time, it could provide a guarantee on levies, but there is no base guarantee. Dir. Blanford asked if this should be part of our legislative ask and Ms. Berge noted that time has already passed. The bills will likely be dropped, but they may not have the votes to pass. Noel Treat noted State Superintendent Dorn's lawsuit, and how it could be a big challenge around using our levies to fund salaries. After the suit was filed, parents were added as plaintiffs, so the lawsuit could continue even when the state superintendent changes. Ms. Berge also noted with the lawsuit there is no definition of basic education and that factors into what is in and out of the box, and is a question that will have to be dealt with. Dir. Peters asked for clarification on that point and Ms. Berge stated that there is a broad definition of what is in basic education, but highlighted the point of what is it when districts do other things, like 7 or 8 periods or extended summers, and what is the legislature's responsibility. Ms. Berge then spoke about Director Harris' question on the Department of Early Learning and how they control birth to 2 federal education dollars through the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. They have been concerned about how much overhead the districts are taking on and want every dollar to go to third party administrators of birth to 2 work. They want to limit what districts can spend the dollars on, but the law says birth to 2 is the responsibility of school districts, and districts decide how the money is spent. If that law was changed to take birth to 2 off the table for school districts, that would be a different conversation. They are now proposing an administrative rule where school districts will bear more of the costs, based on the designation of where funds will go.

Ms. Berge noted the communication plan for upcoming meetings and other outreach to both parents and staff. She then reviewed slide 7, prototypical state funding compared to WSS, and then noted additions to the WSS in recent years. Dir. Peters asked about the cost related to the 2017 drop of one student per class. Michael Tolley spoke to how it was done to address overloaded classrooms in some of our high schools, and in 4th and 5th grades, it was done to reduce the number of splits in classrooms. Dir. Peters asked how that looks at a high school and Mr. Tolley noted that it depends on the course, but it does impact effectiveness. Staff confirmed that this change did occur, and when asked if teachers are paid if their classes are oversized, that was also confirmed. Dir. Peters asked about our average size now and Supt. Nyland noted that is shown in our staffing numbers and Mr. Tolley noted that this is just related to the WSS, as high schools may also get additional funds to pay for other staffing. Dir. Peters noted the need for reconciliation in this area, as it does not reflect the reality she hears about from families. Mr. Tolley noted he can provide the Board information on the impact of that reduction. Dir. Burke reflected on the funding formula and how it would imply that we have under-enrollment in other areas, or we would have seen overall enrollment growth, which Mr. Tolley confirmed. Supt. Nyland noted how the lack of slack in the system causes issues in schools.

Ms. Berge then spoke to the scenarios for increasing class sizes, as one of many ideas generated to look for options. She reviewed the savings from the different possible class sizes. This does have an impact as we would lose money from the state for class size reductions, and our base for the levy would go down, but that is a fairly small impact. Dir. Blanford asked if there is time to talk about opportunity costs, to make an informed decision.

Ms. Berge reviewed the guiding questions on Slide 10. Dir. Blanford asked for clarity on "non-staff items" and Ms. Berge noted that could be curriculum, facilities, library books, etc. Mr. Nielsen noted we need to look for every dollar not represented in a job, and what is the best bang for the buck with each dollar spent, as it is always easier to look for cash than to eliminate a position. Dir. Harris proposed adding a #5 to talk about administrative staff vs. teaching and instructional staff, and addressing preconceived notions as part of the community engagement plan to help address misinformation. Mr. Nielsen noted conversations with superintendent leadership to address that

question, and how the details matter in this work. He noted the question of how we tier the abilities we have to maintain the best momentum around educating our students. Supt. Nyland noted when building the worst case budget, cuts to administration will be bigger than any other cuts to the budget, with teaching prioritized first. We need to keep working on the optics and be seen as partners in leading the way for modeling the reductions. Dir. Burke noted themes that have come up, and how this slide doesn't include budget items that have a lot of momentum already. To avoid disruptions, what are the things that are more fluid that could be defunded and restarted later, to maintain continuity in other areas.

Mr. Berge noted prior years of administrative issues when the district cut too far in administration and could not do the funding projections. We need to have the people to do the compliance things, that we are required to do, and we've seen what happens when they are underfunded – we need to strike a balance and also be accountable to our stakeholders. Mr. Nielsen spoke to what happened in 2002/03 when he became CFO and the challenges that occurred, noting that we now have more time to do this. When speaking to prior cuts in the central office, he noted we could not keep up with compliance items, and while there were salary savings, it was lost in the compliance issues that arose. We have to be very careful to not recreate those things that will cost us more money down the road, making the best decisions for the long term using systemic thoughts. Dir. Harris respectfully disagreed with the investigators example and that was a management issue beyond just the missing staff. She also wanted to talk about things like cutting back on counselors, and now talk about adding counselors, and actually trying to get back to where we were. We need to have the people in the schools to help students be “career and college ready” – what is high touch for students.

Ms. Berge then noted the two slides of student achievement data for targeted student groups and highlighted the question of how to give those who need the most help the right supports. If we can identify those schools that need those supports for those high risk students, we need to structure the budget exercise so they get the most resources and fewest cuts. Clover Codd noted how we can think through an equity lens to minimize disruptions. Dir. Blanford noted cognitive dissonance with these charts and the need to nuance these to be sure it is not seen that we are protecting African American males to the detriment of other students, to make sure it is not seen as one or the other. Dir. Patu reflected on the proportion of southeast schools in the data and how there is quite a lot of work to be done in that area. Dir. Geary noted a SMART goal that calls out AA males, and asked to go back to the rationale and reasoning for developing that goal, and to support them in talking about our decision-making going forward. Dir. Harris noted we need to do a better job communicating the goals and how we developed them. She then asked Mr. Treat about the use of Free/Reduced lunch data for identifying poverty, stating the using “poverty” of as much as possible is critical, and Mr. Treat noted there are legal limits on how we can access and disaggregate that data for those purposes. Ms. Berge noted that was why they did analysis on low income students of color. Mr. Tolley noted that as we move forward with this process, it is critical to look at each school through an equity lens to inform decisions made, and noted the recent budget work done with an equity lens to develop an index that looked at all schools and academic performance and other aspects to consider.

In speaking to the WSS Items slide, Ms. Berge reviewed the list as things that we would have to do to manage the worst case scenario budget. Dir. Harris asked for clarification on points 6 and 9. Ms. Berge noted rolling back to contract limits could also provide funding in other areas for high need schools. Mr. Tolley noted that is part of the “weighted” piece of the WSS, and Ms. Berge noted there are other weighted considerations. Dir. Geary asked, if we got back to reset, it may not have the same impact if schools weren't funding as expected and it may not be as drastic in schools that don't have those capacity issues. Ms. Berge noted an example of how a school like Rainier Beach manages their funding as compared to a school with a larger population like Ballard. Mr. Tolley spoke to how the larger the population of students, the more variety that is provided for students. Mr. Nielsen also noted smaller schools have more adults per students than larger schools. Dir. Harris noted that it sounds like this could work to eliminate some option schools and create an increased PTSA funding need, and unless we address the issue of PTSAs paying for staff, we are perpetuating an issue. Supt. Nyland noted that is true, families paying for staff to make the model work, and

schools that don't have that ability cannot do the same. Dir. Harris would like to see that incorporated in these spreadsheets, as a factor and consequence of what we are doing. Dir. Peters spoke to our pride in offering options to our families, and if staff is saying we can't afford to fund that, we have to be clear about that. Ms. Berge spoke to the Sept. 10th presentation on slide 49 where analysis was done for some of our option schools and their costs. Mr. Nielsen noted we want to maintain option schools to keep options for our families. Since the state is underfunding staff, we have transferred those extra dollars into the staffing, and as we are now facing the levy cliff, we will have fewer funds available for staff. Directors spoke about the concerns of these cuts and how they could drive students into private schools. Dir. Harris spoke about truncating K-8 schools, and how we "sell" our K-8 schools in the community. Mr. Tolley spoke about strategies in engaging families around our option school choices. Carri Campbell spoke about a need to increase the awareness of our great school options on our website. Dir. Patu asked if we go outside the norm for our funding, maybe corporate sponsors or foundations. When we are talking about eliminating important programs, it is devastating to think about. Dir. Geary spoke about messaging and how that could impact families' decisions on attending our schools versus private schools. Ms. Berge noted that staff could look at the policy on PTAs and corporate sponsorship and noted what some other districts do, and how some don't allow PTAs to fund core staff. Dir. Peters spoke about how our district is unique and how it is hard to compare against other districts in our state, and our option schools meet a need.

Ms. Berge then spoke to the draft list for reducing the \$74M, totaling almost \$17M, and noted concerns with some prior cuts that may not have come back, and how that could happen again. There will be a conversation around central administration and Mr. Nielsen noted that the chart may say efficiencies, but cuts in staff could also cause inefficiencies. Dir. Harris asked about eliminating the contingency request reserve, and if that is where the funding to support Emerson is coming from. She then commented that if a school were in dire circumstances, we could be out of funds to help them. Supt. Nyland noted it is yes and no, as there is a continuum of needs that are addressed with that funding. Mr. Tolley noted the desire to address those schools in advance that have higher needs, through an equity lens, but in the fall, when a school comes in under-enrolled, we will have to address it then. Dir. Blanford asked about the Eliminating the Opportunity Gaps (EOG) conversation and if that is factored into central ops cuts. Supt. Nyland spoke about each division being asked to identify 1, 3, and 5% in cuts, and noted that not every division may not be treated equally. Dir. Blanford noted primary concerns that the Board is responsible for approving the cuts, and needing assurances that it won't come back later that "we can't do EOG work done because of cuts made". Mr. Nielsen noted how, at the macro level, cuts throughout the organization affect everything we do. Addressing the layers of risk is our goal during this work. Brent Jones spoke about the work of staff providing EOG services and those staff are not on the table, but cuts will impact the work being done. Dir. Burke spoke to the shortfall as a percentage of the budget and asked if it is looked at on a macro level, would items over a certain amount contribute to the deficit, or those that are less than be a benefit. Mr. Nielsen responded that it was a yes and no, as many funds have strings attached, like federal resources for meals, and we can't cut there. Some solutions don't work for technical and complicated reasons. He then noted the October work session discussion around the macro view of green dollars vs. not, and how the numbers are very skewed there. Dir. Burke agreed, noting that we can't do a straight percentage cut. Ms. Berge noted how staff were instructed to identify cuts in their divisions, taking into consideration areas that could not be cut.

Ms. Berge then spoke to possible cuts addressed through WSS items, coming to \$16.5M. Dir. Burke spoke about how the WSS changes would address 4% of the cuts needed. On slide 9, class size scenarios, he noted a 30% reduction in staffing for high poverty school if class sizes were brought up to 26 per. JoLynn clarified it is around 3.3% for those schools, based on analysis conducted. Dir. Burke noted disproportionate impact on those high poverty schools, because they would have a larger change in classroom sizes. Dir. Harris noted a constituent idea, asking if numbers have been run for a moratorium on high school and middle school athletics for a year. Ms. Berge commented that she did not believe we spend that much in that area and Flip Herndon noted general fund dollars to athletics is around \$1.5M for this year, which includes administrators and coaches, and next year could be up to \$2M. Dir. Patu noted the importance of athletics for our students. Dir. Burke asked if

there are positions that could be evaluated for shifting to a 4-day work week, what could that be, relative to administrative functions that are not in schools. Ms. Berge noted it may not be possible. Pegi McEvoy noted that was part of her staff considerations, to cut down the amount of FTE, rather than eliminate positions outright.

Ms. Berge then noted the three areas being considered to address the remaining \$11.5M, after the cuts via the WSS and non-WSS items. They are hard to bring up, but need to be considered:

- \$4.5M in suspending the ELA adoption this year
- \$5M for curriculum next year
- \$2M for the middle school math adoption

Dir. Blanford asked about other dollars the Board has allocated but that haven't been spent. Ms. Berge noted they could halt some SMART goal work, which would leave another \$2-3M left. Dir. Harris asked if they will be getting an update on that spending soon, which was confirmed.

Ms. Berge noted, in reviewing the recommendations staff is making, staff would like to put check marks next to the suggested \$16.8M in non-WSS items. Dir. Harris noted a past conversation regarding an audit of positions at the John Stanford Center and asked when this could be discussed. Ms. Berge noted 2x2 meeting requests have been sent out to discuss that topic, amongst others, with Directors. That feedback would be used at the January 11th work session. Dir. Harris stated a hope to err on the side of transparency, and Ms. Berge noted it will be, once the conversations are distilled down. Mr. Nielsen noted conversations with staff and that we would not use word "audit" in the review of positions. Mr. Nielsen noted this is very serious work, and when talking about how to fix this, there has been concern noted from the legislature at macro level, and spoke to the need for more funding from Olympia. Supt. Nyland noted this will be challenging for our schools and the district, but we will find a way through. He then referred to a statement from the Supreme Court in an October ruling regarding the timing for the legislature to meet its full funding obligation and possible legislation that could be passed to extend the timing of the levy cliff. Dir. Peters asked if any direction is needed from the Board, and Ms. Berge asked for any "thumbs down" on suggestions provided. Dir. Blanford noted the need for a conversation around changing the WSS and funding in classroom. Ms. Berge noted those changes make up \$16.8M. Dir. Blanford noted the need for more detail on the EOG impact. Ms. Berge noted that while there will be impacts, there are considerations for how to make cuts while moving forward with goal work. Dir. Harris spoke to how devil is in the details, expressing her discomfort, and noted her agreement with Dir. Blanford concerns. Dir. Burke thumbs down on the word eliminate, would rather see as divide by 2. Mr. Nielsen thanked Directors for their feedback and noted the next steps in starting the WSS work, continuing with that committee for rest of this month, and how they will continue to ask the question for where the equity piece fits in. The answer will be what the committee comes back with. Ms. Berge noted the January 11th work session will include the WSS conversation. Mr. Nielsen noted they will clarify these points with Directors between now and then in the 2x2s. Dir. Harris noted the \$4M cut to central ops/admin and the ask of Dr. Jones to not cut folks with high touch in schools, and she would like the detail in the 2x2s.

The meeting recessed at 12:11 pm and reconvened at 12:28 pm.

ELIMINATING THE OPPORTUNITY GAPS (EOG)

Director Patu acknowledged Sebrena Burr, President of the Seattle Council PTSA, and Erin Okuno, Executive Director for the Southeast Seattle Education Coalition (SESEC), and the public in attendance. Brent Jones reviewed the materials provided for the discussion. For the EOG history handout, Dir. Harris asked if staff would be mentioning the work done in 2002 around the student assignment plan that resegregated our schools and Dir. Peters noted she would like to have that added with the reason it was done. Dr. Jones reviewed today's purpose and thanked the Board for maintaining the district's focus on the three Strategic Plan goals. He noted the state assessment results for all of our students, but that we have a challenge in the 50 point plus gap in this performance. He spoke to our positive outlier schools and looking at their data to see what can be shared, be reflective of our practice and learn from our progress. Dr. Jones noted eliminating

opportunity gaps is all about improving student success and then reviewed how EOG is an aligned and cohesive approach. Dir. Harris asked for #4, what are the results for replicating high-impact practices. Mr. Tolley noted the information on the positive outlier schools informed the decision to focus on positive relationships. Mike Starosky noted work being done in schools, principals working together to share what is working and where they are struggling and where they need supports, to “deprivatize” their practice. He also noted Executive Director of Schools Kim Whitworth has her principals, in addition to work down here, working in professional learning communities where they share a prop up practice, currently around relationships. Dir. Pinkham asked what is being done at other school districts, like in Edmonds. Dr. Jones noted we are part of the Road Map districts, and we work together on best practices, see what are other experiences, and then noted the Highline moratorium on discipline and seeing what challenges they have faced and what worked, and also noted that Edmonds is not a part of that group. Bernardo Ruiz noted Edmonds is doing a lot of things that we are doing. Dir. Patu noted she would like to see something tangible, and hopes to see correlated effort and what models are working or not, and how to follow up on the successes. Dr. Jones noted they would hand out cards to capture ideas. Dir. Blanford noted the research report from Dr. Ronald Ferguson on districts that have closed the gaps, and the need for a deep understanding of how to close the gaps. Dir. Geary requested to see a corresponding graph that compares us to similarly situated urban districts, for better optic of comparison. Supt. Nyland noted some of the comparisons done with Boston, Montgomery, and Oakland school districts. Dir. Burke noted he would like to see for, addressing the gaps, the right level of granularity of detail, and what are the practices that really help that gap. Wyeth Jessee noted how we are coming to agreement on defining the work to eliminate the opportunity gaps, to create the discipline that is necessary.

Dr. Jones reviewed the circumstances in the district prior to the declaration that closing opportunity gaps is the issue of our time, and the steps that have occurred since it was declared as such. He then reviewed some examples of progress made, speaking to specific examples for the focuses around “4 P’s” - positive relationships, positive beliefs, positive partnerships, and positive learning. Supt. Nyland noted that for PSAT/SAT testing, it puts the students on the radar of colleges. Dir. Peters asked around the numbers for testing, are they of students taking the test, and are the tests during school time now, which was confirmed. She next asked about the covering of the cost, and Mr. Tolley noted that was part of the funding asked for this year. Clover Codd noted that Race to the Top had paid for it before, but that grant has ended, so we funded for this year, and it is not yet built into next year’s budget. The cost was identified at around \$285k and would likely not be included in next year’s budget. Dir. Geary noted how it gives students access to college search and also ties into the Khan Academy, and this is a good investment as it helps so much in pre-college steps and resources. Dir. Peters noted this might be something the City could invest in. Dir. Harris noted a comment on Sarah Pritchett finding money for mentoring at 5 more schools, and how the Mayor said he would be putting money in his budget. Supt. Nyland spoke to the different initiatives in the Mayor’s budget. Dir. Harris asked if the mentorship money is the same as noted for Ms. Pritchett, which it is. Dir. Burke noted the PSAT/SAT doesn’t have to just be our lift, and asked if we can tie this into a statewide thing, maybe a graduation requirement. Dir. Harris noted speaking to the State Superintendent-Elect next Tuesday.

Dr. Jones reviewed the vision for the progress for this year and the next two, and spoke to the challenges and how to address them in the next steps. He asked Directors and staff to get into groups of 3 to discuss short and long term ways staff and the Board can improve our collective efforts. As the conversation came back to the full group, Dr. Jones asked groups to speak to the most powerful ideas presented. Groups noted the training and on-boarding of all staff to be very clear on what it means to teach and lead in the district, that we believe in race and equity work, it is long term and annual training, and to look for intersections between central office staff, school principals, and the Board, and creating opportunities to learn together. The next group spoke about the data and the fundamentals to EOG, keep those front and center and work collectively together, and limiting the distractions. The next group spoke to identifying and replicating what works, to recognize one of these schools per month and have a representative from that school present at a Board meeting on a strategy that works for them, and also those of us who see successful strategies and share those

back with staff, and designing a special award for eliminating opportunity gaps. The next group noted keeping the focus on this work when working on the budget, and continuing to develop metrics and data on EOG functions. The last group spoke to the tight correlation between gap closure and strong, authentic leadership, and we are tasking leaders in schools with examining their practices and changing where necessary. As a group they came to recognize, and where the Board is making that commitment in their work, it gives the opportunity for how they can fulfill their role as leaders of this organizations.

Dr. Jones noted the greatest progress in alignment and correlation, and commented on the benefit of the EOG steering committee. He reviewed the charge of the EOG steering committee and refining the work to “fire on all cylinders” and working in alignment. He noted the 17 projects for the 4 P’s and the innovation born out of the EOG work. He asked the group to later reflect on ways in which your leadership and the District’s EOG work can be utilized to transform Seattle Public Schools. He then asked for input on key takeaways. Dir. Peters noted for slide 5 around the impact of income disparity, 84% of our AA students are FRL students, while only 9% of our white students are FRL students. There is still a gap even when taking income into account. Dir. Blanford noted we have an expectation to serve all of students well and don’t want to make excuses for FRL, regardless of income level, there is still a gap. Dir. Peters clarified that even when you account for poverty, there is still a gap. Dir. Blanford noted a study that looked at individual states and rates of gap closure, and for the state of Washington, it would take 100 years to close its gaps, and we have a larger gap and are likely closing it slower than other districts in the state. If we have to cut budget from EOG work, he doesn’t want to cut anything that is seen as crucial, and asked that Dr. Jones be a part of that analysis. Dir. Burke asked why Seattle is such an outlier for the English Language Arts rate, and Dir. Geary noted to look at what builds up those students who perform well. Dir. Blanford noted a Stanford study that looked at the make-up of families in our district that value education and impart that on their children. Flip Herndon noted the need to eliminate the gap by bringing the students up, and not by having the higher number drop down. Mr. Tolley noted the top performance level has incrementally increased over time through the initiatives put out in the district, like when we aligned to state test scores and the work done to prepare teachers for that change and how they teach. Dir. Patu spoke to the highly capable program and the number of students of color in that program. Mr. Tolley noted that is the same as setting the taking of the PSAT as a mandatory requirement changes the expectations for students. Dr. Codd noted that the conversation on what are the strategies that are working and what data backs that up and how to replicate, got her thinking of outlier schools and their consistent strategies, data showed southeast schools that are closing the gap more quickly and strategies there that weren’t implemented elsewhere and overlapping those two groups to see what can be replicated. Dir. Harris noted Bellevue and Mercer school districts were not shown and she would like to see where higher income numbers compare. She noted the timeline goes too slowly and would like to see how we could speed that up, while also addressing the budget issues. She then noted the advanced learning session that left the Board wanting and how to pick that up and move it forward. Dr. Jones noted there are things that have existed for a long time and need to make sure to address underlying structural pieces. Dir. Peters noted in the area of data, the slide 5 data are just one year’s data, and would also like to see graduation trends, attendance results, and other metrics to see how students are doing. Supt. Nyland spoke to what Everett has been doing and how it has progressed over multiple years.

The meeting recessed at 1:48 pm and reconvened at 1:56 pm.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Carri Campbell reviewed the discussion that is coming for the next section and introduced the members of the community engagement task force that were in attendance: Sebrina Burr, Executive Director of Schools Sarah Pritchett, Principal Norma Zavala, teacher Craig Seasholes, and Alki parent Jennifer Ogle. She then asked attendees to make eye contact with someone they know and write a note of gratitude for that person on the provided star. She then asked attendees to exchange their gratitude stars and explain what they wrote. Ms. Campbell noted the star is from the district logo

“reaching for the stars.” Ms. Campbell then spoke about the work to bring the voice of the community into the model of community engagement, and noted the steps for this discussion. Ms. Campbell noted the progress that has been made so far. Dir. Patu commented on the impact of the work that has been done and the change she has seen in the district, in appreciation that the messages are getting out to our families.

Ms. Campbell noted the problems that were identified to be solved, and then noted the theory of action for the work. She reviewed the five steps to community engagement and the tasks involved in each step. Dir. Blanford spoke about prior engagement work, and how it was often the “cart before the horse”, telling them what the preferred state is without them being able to influence it. Ms. Campbell noted how that works in the current model. Dir. Blanford comment on the tension between wanting to know enough to make decisions, and getting community involved when they might not be fully informed on complex issues. Supt. Nyland spoke to this concern within the scope of the engagement work on our possible budget shortfall for next year. Ms. Campbell noted she can bring that point back to the discussions of the group. Dir. Geary noted that in some cases the public may not be the decision makers in the end, but the engagement can still be of benefit to the process, and while we may not be able to meet everyone’s needs, we can make sure they feel heard. Dir. Harris noted situations of doing “to” instead of “with,” as this is a representative situation, not a democracy. In speaking to a recent thread on the Save Seattle Schools blog, she noted comments on the budget work calling on the Board to plan as if there won’t be budget cuts. She then spoke about having conversations with people and soliciting input and being better at saying where information is located is a culture change, and it matters to the parents, communities and staff. Ms. Burr also noted it can be a matter of capacity, and as we do this work, knowing that messaging has to lift up the knowledge of those being engaged, which creates collective wisdom of what it looks like for them, and for us to draw them a picture of what it looks like. Look for visual pictures that can express what is going on. She also noted the importance of building up the capacity of the people in this room, and how to move forward together. Ms. Ogle noted that the parents of SPS students are as diverse as the students, so everyone has different perspectives and abilities, and bringing complex issues to parents may help to identify unintended consequences ahead of time.

Ms. Campbell noted the current pyramid model, and then spoke to the task force goals and outcomes. Dir. Harris noted it is delightful to sit in Board committee meetings, as the action reports will now include using the community engagement task force tool.

Ms. Campbell then noted the three questions to keep in mind on Slide 11, and the key messages in that work. Principal Zavala thanked everyone for the opportunity to engage in this venue and respond to questions. When speaking about engagement, think about our audience and how the meetings might need to look different to get true engagement.

Ms. Campbell continued on with the recommendations from the task force around models and tools for engagement, in general and in regards to evaluation/outcomes, stakeholders, race and equity, and engagement standards. Dr. Jones noted that time allowance was not noted in the document, which needs to be considered and factored into the work. Dr. Codd spoke about the engagement process and even on the inform level, we still need to build in the capacity of understanding for those engaged. Mr. Nielsen noted the need to tier our engagement in the right levels to have the work be done at its most effective. Dir. Burke spoke to how the engagement can be done to have positive messaging. Ms. Ogle spoke to a discussion at Dir. Burke’s community meeting on boundary changes and the impacts on people who might not be as likely to engage.

Ms. Campbell then asked attendees to look at the recommendations and what would be the most important to take or address, for her to take back to the task force, and then asked attendees to do a turn and talk about the recommendations. She then asked attendees for their input on what to take back. Points noted were that engagement is sharing of power and how to do that. Ms. Burr noted there is a component in the work on how to share power and how it is embedded in the relationships where trust is built and opinions are valued. Other input was on concrete suggestions for how each

building engages with their populations and holding the leaders accountable for the engagement. Feedback also included how to bring the “table” to the communities they are interested in engaging with – go where they are.

Dir. Harris asked if there can be agreement on keeping this particular task force going and agreement was seen by the nodding of Director heads. Ms. Campbell noted, moving forward, it would be a community engagement advisory committee.

2017 BOARD COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT PREFERENCES

Director Patu then opened the discussion of the Director assignments preferences. Ms. Hale reviewed the process and Directors gave their preferences for Board Committees and other Board roles.

The meeting adjourned at 3:09 pm.