



Seattle School Board Retreat
Saturday, March 4, 2017 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Auditorium, John Stanford Center

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 10:11 am. Directors Blanford, Burke, Geary, Harris, Peters and Pinkham were present.

Staff present were 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 Engagement Officer Carri Campbell, Chief of Schools Mike Starosky, Chief of Student Supports Wyeth Jessee, Chief of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction Kyle Kinoshita, Chief Information Officer John Kroll, Executive Director of Government Relations & Strategic Initiatives Erinn Bennett, Director of Policy & Board Relations Nate Van Duzer, Equity and Race Relations Coordinator Abraham Rodriguez-Hernandez, Equity and Race Relations Specialist Fran Partridge, Deputy General Counsel John Cerqui, and Senior Assistant General Counsel Nazik Youssef.

ICE BREAKERS

Staff and directors participated in icebreaker activities.

CHECK IN AND ACTION ON BOARD GOALS & PROCESS

Nate Van Duzer provided an overview of the proposed Board goals. Directors discussed whether or not to expand the focus of professional development trainings beyond the stated focus on racial equity and cultural competency. Director Peters noted the potential for having a regular schedule of trainings for Board directors over a multi-year period. In response to a question from Director Pinkham, staff discussed the community task forces and advisory committees focused on racial equity and cultural competency.

Directors discussed Goal 1 and the balance between spending time getting to know communities in depth versus interacting with a breadth of community groups. Director Harris noted the importance of sharing information amongst directors and between staff and directors.

Director Peters proposed amending the first goal to say “Each quarter, each director will aim to.”

Director Burke moved approval of the goals as amended. Director Blanford seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

RACE & EQUITY TOOL TRAINING

Staff presenters Abraham Rodriguez-Hernandez and Fran Partridge introduced themselves and the objectives for the training. They discussed Policy No. 0030 as a foundation for the work of racial equity, the historical context for this work, and the distinction between a racial equity lens and a racial equity tool. Staff noted that the tool was created by community engagement and also invites community engagement through its use.

Directors discussed the history of the tool and, while taking a working lunch, how they can use the tool as Board directors.

Staff shared a video that provided an example of the City of Seattle's use of the racial equity tool in which the City moved away from a complaint-based system. They shared that the tool provides analysis to inform a decision, but does not make the decision.

Director Harris asked how the racial equity tool and community engagement tool are linked; Carri Campbell responded that the two are deeply connected. Directors and staff also discussed the differences between applying a racial and an economic (poverty) lens.

Staff discussed in more detail the nature of the racial equity tool. Directors and staff then broke into small groups to examine different steps in the tool.

For each step, groups reported back about the data and evidence needed for each step.

Step 1: Who are the stakeholders? What are barriers? What are unmet needs?

Step 2: What is the weight of impact to different stakeholders? What was done to eliminate barriers to participation, particularly from quiet voices? How was community engagement tool used? How to get representative input through different levels of participation? What are unspoken barriers? Do we compensate people for volunteering time?

Director Geary sparked a discussion about how to interpret and present data in a racially equitable way.

Step 3: What is data bias? What data were explored? What are definitions behind data? Focus on inquiry, benefits and unintended consequences for the short and long term.

Step 4: Use data to measure success. Have timelines and milestones to reflect on progress. Director Peters noted that in a resource-poor environment, success is sometimes framed as do no harm, or do the least amount of harm.

Staff provided concluding remarks.

SPS AND SEATTLE IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS - FORECAST

Dr. Flip Herndon provided an overview of the materials and explained the student projection process. He noted that the 2016-17 SMART Goal 3, Program Review, is an important part of this conversation.

Dr. Herndon discussed the potential for shifting programs operating under general fund lease payments by using capital funds wisely. He noted City-District projects or City projects that affect the District, including the Lander Street overpass and parks and field development.

He noted that a lot of the projected enrollment growth in the District is at the secondary level. He shared the experience of other districts around the country experiencing rapid growth.

Dr. Herndon discussed the changing demographics of the city, noting the increased cost of living for the city. He gave some historical context about the District's buildings. He talked about the City's urban hubs and villages zoned high density.

Director Harris asked about the projected growth of charter schools and projected private school enrollment. Dr. Herndon noted that we don't have enough trend data yet to know the impact of charter schools, but that it is being monitored. He commented that private schools have capacity issues as well.

Director Blanford noted the importance of tracking how many households do not have children and, if that grows, paying attention to if that puts school levy passage at risk.

BOARD LEGAL BOOTCAMP (PART 1)

Noel Treat provided an overview of the agenda for this section of the retreat. He gave an overview of the Open Public Meetings Act and what that means for conducting Board business. He provided a refresher about the Public Records Act and Ethics Policy. Directors asked several questions about gifts, public records, and conflicts of interest. Mr. Treat provided several scenarios for directors to examine and discuss.

John Cerqui then led a discussion about tort and employment liability for the district, noting the district's duty of reasonable care to protect students. Staff and directors discussed employee claims related to harassment, intimidation and bullying. Mr. Cerqui discussed responsibilities related to the Board's hiring authority.

Nazik Youssef discussed the three federal laws that protect students with disabilities: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disability Act. She provided more detail on the IDEA, explaining the four resolution processes available under that act.

Ms. Youssef also provided detail about Title IX Liability issues, including an outline about the different complaint processes.

Mr. Treat asked for feedback about potential future topics for legal training. Director Peters and Burke asked for more information about risk management.

The retreat was adjourned at 3:15 pm.