

# Board Special Meeting

## School Board Retreat

Saturday, June 03, 2017 10:00am-3:00pm

Auditorium, John Stanford Center

2445 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134



## Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 10:07am. Directors Peters, Harris, Blanford, Geary, Pinkham and Burke were present. Director Patu arrived at 11:17am.

Staff present were Superintendent Larry Nyland, Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen, 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, Chief Engagement Officer Carri Campbell, Chief of Strategy and Partnerships Brent Jones, Chief of Schools Mike Starosky, Chief of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction Kyle Kinoshita, Chief of Student Support Services Wyeth Jessee, Chief Information Officer John Krull, Executive Director of Government Relations & Strategic Initiatives Erinn Bennett, Executive Director of Coordinated School Health Pat Sander, Senior Assistant General Counsel Ronald Boy, General Counsel Noel Treat, Manager of Health Education Lisa Love, and Director of Policy & Board Relations Nate Van Duzer.

### **ICE BREAKERS**

Staff and directors participated in an icebreaker activity.

### **IDENTITY SAFETY: CREATING SAFE AND WELCOMING SCHOOLS FOR LGBT YOUTH**

Dr. Nyland introduced the importance of identity safety for our students and the staff presenter, Lisa Love. Ms. Love provided an overview of the objectives for the presentation and noted this topic is important to enable schools to be safe and welcoming for all students. She reviewed terms and definitions and stages of (trans)gender development. She highlighted SPS data from the Healthy Youth Survey that reveals LGB kids are at higher risk in many different areas. Directors and staff discussed how the district is making systemic steps that create identity safety in schools. Ms. Love highlighted the LGBTQ-related initiatives in the district, including inclusive policies, gender and sexuality alliances, sexual health curriculum, staff trainings, and all-gender bathrooms. Ronald Boy noted funding challenges and opportunities. Ms. Love reviewed key messages and introduced the panel of two parents and one recent graduate. Panelists shared their personal experiences in SPS, highlighting both positive experiences and the need for further support from district, school and PTSA leadership.

Director Patu arrived at 11:17am.

Directors and staff took a break for lunch at 11:25am.

### **2017-18 MAJOR INITIATIVES PREVIEW**

At 11:43am, Director Peters introduced Erinn Bennett to discuss this section. Ms. Bennett noted a number of items that will be coming to the Board in the coming year. Stephen Nielsen and Dr. Nyland discussed the alignment of these initiatives. Director Burke noted his focus on the areas where decisions by the Board are needed. In response to a question from Director Peters, Michael Tolley provided more information around the secondary re-visioning process. Directors and staff discussed a future Board action on extending the length of the current strategic plan.

## **STUDENT ASSIGNMENT PLAN**

Director Peters introduced Flip Herndon to present this portion of the presentation. Dr. Herndon provided an overview of the objectives for this section. He briefly discussed the history of the student assignment plan development over the last 8 years. He noted the areas that are being considered for updates in the 2018-19 student assignment plan. Directors and staff discussed several areas of potential changes to the plan, including special education language, clarification of the definition of capacity within the plan, looking at timelines and processes related to school choice, moving from transition plans to a final plan, and program pathways and their budget implications.

Directors and staff further discussed issues within the school choice process, including how capacity is determined, whether the priority is serving students or filling spaces, ways to identify schools that families want to move out of and focus supports there, timelines, what is the end goal for the assignment plan in terms of level of choice, having a set of Board guiding principles, the benefits that come from diverse student populations within schools, assignment of special education students, and availability of advanced classes.

Wyeth Jessee then opened a discussion about how to serve advanced learners in high school. He noted the increase in the number of students in the Highly Capable Cohort (HCC) could cause looming capacity-related challenges in the current designated assignment system, providing some enrollment data. He noted the discrepancy between the number of different AP courses offered at Garfield versus other attendance area schools and noted the desire to decrease this gap. He provided an overview of the work that staff have to do to examine this issue in more detail. Directors then discussed some benefits and challenges of a new high school HCC service model, including funding challenges. Director Peters asked staff to include the HCC Advisory Committee in its community engagement efforts around this work. Directors discussed additional data that is needed. Dr. Herndon noted the intersection of this work with the work of the High School Boundary changes coming with the opening of Lincoln High School and the need to make these decisions at the same time.

Carri Campbell led a short conversation about upcoming community engagement around the student assignment plan, noting that staff plan to ask for community input around HCC pathways. Director Harris noted the importance of communicating to the community consequences and unintended consequences of different decisions and also expressed concerns regarding private and charter schools.

## **BOARD – SUPERINTENDENT AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS: EXPLORATION OF ALTERNATIVES**

Some directors took short, rolling breaks during this discussion section.

Nate Van Duzer provided an introduction to this discussion topic. Dr. Nyland noted that staff put a lot of time and effort into current communications (estimating 40 staff hours for a Friday Memo), but that response from directors is that the communication is not always satisfactory.

Directors expressed mixed reactions to the Friday Memo, with some noting that the Friday Memo is not always the most accessible document and that it has grown over time and others appreciating its value. Director Geary suggested having webpages that are responsive to hot topics for which links can be shared. Director Burke asked for re-training about how to handle hot topics. Director Harris asked that emails back to constituents on hot topics get sent to directors. Directors expressed appreciation for additional staff effort to keep directors informed. Director Pinkham suggested an every-other-week memo to save staff resources. Directors and staff discussed the complicated dynamics regarding sharing information with the Board that directors need to know but which is not yet ready for public consumption.

## **BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT**

Director Peters introduced this topic and provided a history of the establishment of the previous Board Code of Conduct, which was introduced in 2015, and discontinued in 2016. She highlighted some points in the previous code and suggested that some of them might be useful reminders to the Board in general and to consider as guidelines for the Board going forward. General Counsel Noel Treat provided a brief overview of other legal requirements, including the legal mandate to respect confidentiality, noting that none of them discuss relational elements that the previous code established. Directors discussed the utility of a Board Code of Conduct and the appropriate role and avenues of dissent and communication within the Board. Several directors noted that this would be a decision for the future newly-constituted Board. Director Harris noted her strong opposition to implementing a code, adding that it is not legally required and that other legislative bodies do not have one. Directors discussed some examples of interactions involving directors from earlier in the year.

Director Pinkham left the meeting at 3:04pm.

### **BOARD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOAL REPORTS**

Given the time, Director Peters noted that this section could be wrapped into Board comments at the next Board meeting on Sept. 20.

The retreat was adjourned at 3:05pm.