



## Board Special Meeting

### **Work Session: Strategic Plan**

Wednesday, January 30, 2019, 4:30 – 6:00pm

Board Auditorium, John Stanford Center

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

## Minutes

### Call to Order

Director Geary called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. Directors Geary, Pinkham, Mack, Burke, DeWolf, Patu, and Harris were present. Staff present were Superintendent Denise Juneau, Executive Director of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives Erinn Bennett, and Chief of Equity, Partnerships, and Engagement Dr. Brent Jones. Adam Anderson, Chief Operating Officer with the District Management Group (DMGroup), was also present.

### Work Session: Strategic Plan

Ms. Bennett reviewed work to date to develop the draft Strategic Plan, including ongoing work by the Strategic Plan Steering Committee, and highlighted Strategic Plan materials available on the district website. Ms. Bennett noted that the Strategic Plan is anticipated to be introduced and acted upon by the Board in March 2019.

Dr. Jones reflected on the work of the Steering Committee and spoke about engagement events held to review the draft Strategic Plan with stakeholders and to collect their feedback. He noted that the district was intentional about meeting with communities of color that had not historically been at the table. Dr. Jones noted that response forms were used to collect feedback from stakeholders at all engagement events and that those responses were provided to DMGroup for analysis. Dr. Jones spoke to the demographics of survey respondents.

Superintendent Juneau noted that the coming Friday marks her seventh month with the district. She reflected on the continuous learning she has had through numerous engagement events. She spoke to the feedback received from community members and the importance of having the Strategic Plan followed through with action to address the district's most persistent challenges.

Mr. Anderson spoke to his work with the district to develop the new Strategic Plan and with DMGroup. In response to a question from Director Harris, Mr. Anderson spoke to his past experience at Chicago Public Schools.

Mr. Anderson noted the importance of inclusive engagement and using the information that is collected. He noted that Seattle has thought innovatively and thoughtfully about how to conduct engagement and who is on the Steering Committee. He reflected on the bravery and innovativeness of the Steering Committee in developing the draft Strategic Plan. Mr. Anderson noted that the engagement process is ongoing, with additional comments continuing to be analyzed. Mr. Anderson explained that the themes shared during the Work Session consist of interim themes, with additional meetings and analysis to be included later.

Mr. Anderson reflected on the comprehensive approach the district has taken to collect feedback and spoke to the demographics of the survey respondents. Mr. Anderson noted that stakeholders have

provided compelling feedback that the priorities are clear and spoke to the distinction between online and in-person meeting respondents on the question of whether they agree that the proposed priorities resonate. Director Harris asked Mr. Anderson to speak to the meaning of resonance in this context. Mr. Anderson noted that it was not specifically defined, but that generally would mean that the respondents understand and agree with the priorities.

Director DeWolf noted the strong resonance of the priorities given the demographics of those providing online survey responses.

Director Burke asked whether there is an identified margin of error for the data. Mr. Anderson explained that the results are more of a pulse check about whether the wording is clear and the priorities are resonating.

Director Mack noted that many of the online survey respondents did not answer with regard to their race/ethnicity and spoke to the challenges of extrapolating from the data.

Director Burke spoke to the bold language that has been put forward and ways in which it could be seen as confrontational, but noted that it is important and of a moral imperative. Director Burke asked whether there is work to be done to increase the understanding and resonance of the priorities with stakeholders or whether the numbers are reflective of a philosophical difference that cannot be surmounted. Mr. Anderson suggested that the district can review and be responsive to comments received about the clarity of the language and by consistently communicating the priorities of the finalized Strategic Plan to the community.

Director Geary noted that initial reactions to the priorities during in-person meetings were far different from the impressions that were left after the opportunity for discussion. She noted that the responses provided online are more reflective of initial reactions.

Mr. Anderson highlighted the key themes heard across engagement meetings and through the online survey.

Director Mack spoke to the way in which feedback has been incorporated into the draft priorities. She stated that she has questions about KPIs and methods for measurement. She noted that marginalized groups, such as non-native English speakers, need to be incorporated appropriately and spoke to the importance of measuring what matters, measuring growth, and ensuring that the district is looking at students of color. She noted that priority 1 is not currently fully connected to the KPIs.

Director Patu spoke to the categories used for the disaggregation of data by race/ethnicity and the focus on Native Hawaiians and not other Pacific Islander groups.

Mr. Anderson distinguished between the themes that had been consistently heard across all meetings and online data and themes that were heard across many of the meetings and/or online.

Director DeWolf spoke about the theme of providing additional rationale and asked about work done to increase understanding about targeted universalism. Dr. Jones noted that some of the Steering Committee members have requested an understandable way to explain targeted universalism and that materials are being prepared to provide that clarity.

Director Burke spoke to the importance of setting measurable goals and asked about the opportunity for Board deliberation. Director Burke asked how the consistent themes would be incorporated.

Ms. Bennett stated that the themes and feedback will be brought back to the Steering Committee to consider and to work from in refining the Strategic Plan.

Director Harris asked whether Directors would like to dedicate an hour during the March retreat to consider the Strategic Plan. Director Mack provided further reflections on the draft Strategic Plan. Director Geary noted the importance of ensuring the Strategic Plan resonates with the Board and suggested taking some time to consider refinements during the March Board retreat. Director Harris confirmed there was a Board consensus to include the Strategic Plan on the March Board retreat agenda. Director Geary offered to facilitate the discussion.

Ms. Bennett asked that the Directors provide current feedback, to be brought forward and considered by the Steering Committee. Director Pinkham noted that he was not ready to provide feedback until the full analysis has been completed. Superintendent Juneau asked for Directors' personal feedback regarding the Strategic Plan, rather than just their perspectives on the feedback received from stakeholders.

Director Patu spoke to the disaggregation of data by race/ethnicity.

Director DeWolf noted his support for the priorities but suggested further refinement may be needed to make language clearer and definable, such as "well-informed" and "whole child." He suggested avoiding jargon and paring back the language to just "informed."

Director Burke stated that the priorities are clear. He noted that connecting priority 1 to "each and every student" without diluting the impact will be challenging and import. He noted that priority 2 does not speak to using a LEAN model or efficiency and delivering services at a lower cost. He suggested this be incorporated given the dominance of the budget as a consideration. He stated that priorities 3 and 4 were great as drafted. He noted that he is struggling with the KPIs, which are similar to those currently in place.

Director Geary spoke to the way the theory of action ties together eliminating achievement gaps so that every student receives a high-quality education.

Director DeWolf spoke to using consistent metrics, to the work to be done to improve the experience of employees of color, and the value of continuity across KPIs. Director Geary noted that she also agrees with continuity of measures.

Director Mack noted support for including the concept of "across student abilities" and spoke to the title for priority 1. She reflected on the need to speak to each and every student while also using a targeted universalism approach.

Director Patu reflected on the disaggregation of data by race/ethnicity.

Director DeWolf spoke to the way in which focusing on those students furthest from educational justice will improve the education of all students. Director Mack stated that priority 1 speaks to targeted universalism, but that the title does not clearly note that.

Director Geary suggested more clearly framing priority 1 to speak to targeted universalism.

Director Mack noted her support for the language provided in priority 2 with regard to operational systems and suggested that operational efficiency be incorporated into the language. She also suggested that the titles for priorities 2, 3, and 4 be refined to be more descriptive with adjectives, in a form analogous to priority 1.

Superintendent Juneau spoke to feedback received from families about operational systems and the nuance of priority 2 being framed from the standpoint of how families experience district systems. Director Mack suggested adding something to the title to highlight that it is student-centric. Director Harris suggested that it be framed as student- and family-centric; removing jargon, such as "whole

child”; and that the concept of targeted universalism be described in plain language. Director Harris reflected on the tone of the draft language and said that it is important that the Strategic Plan not talk down to people. She suggested adding footnotes with additional resources for concepts that require more explanation.

Director Geary spoke to the value of speaking to targeted universalism directly in the plan in order to elevate the concept and to have it become a more widely understood philosophy over the term of the Strategic Plan.

Director Patu noted that students are expected to speak up for themselves but not all students feel comfortable doing so and reflected on improvements in encouraging students to tell teachers what they need. She noted that paying more attention to quiet students will be important to ensure their needs are met.

Director Pinkham requested that language reference both cultural responsiveness and cultural competence throughout. He asked that a clear goal be set for educators participating in cultural responsiveness training.

Director DeWolf reflected on Director Harris’ comments regarding the tenor of the language and suggested using this Strategic Plan as a platform to be bold and explicit in focusing on students furthest from educational justice, with an intentional focus on African American males. Director Harris suggested that the phrase targeted universalism is not well understood and is not clearly reflected in the language. She suggested that the language provide the “why” of this focus.

Director Geary highlighted the theory of action and suggested that there be an additional footnote that speaks to this concept.

Directors discussed further incorporating the concept of community in the priorities.

Director Burke noted that on priority 2 he would like to see language around optimization. He highlighted Director DeWolf’s comments regarding priority 1 and suggested adding language that says “because what benefits African American males benefits all students.”

Director Mack noted support for Director Burke’s suggestions. Director Mack spoke to priority 4 and the challenges for families with engaging with the system and noted that the KPIs should speak to this.

Director Pinkham noted support for providing explanation for the intentional focus on African American males and spoke to refinements around community engagement. Director Harris suggested the concept of reciprocity needs to be further incorporated into community engagement. She spoke to survey data about family satisfaction.

Director Patu spoke to the importance of students being well served, particularly students of color, and that students be encouraged to continue their education.

### **Adjourn**

Director Geary adjourned the meeting at 6:08 p.m.