

Board Special Meeting

2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134



Work Session: Superintendent 2014-15 Annual Evaluation
Executive Session: Evaluate the performance of a public employee
Monday, November 2, 2015, 4:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Auditorium, John Stanford Center

Minutes

The Board Special Meeting was called to order at 4:35pm. Directors Blanford, Carr, Martin-Morris, McLaren, Peaslee and Peters were present. Director Carr noted Director Patu was unable to attend this evening.

Work Session: Superintendent 2014-15 Annual Evaluation

Superintendent Nyland discussed the goals of student achievement. He noted that this evaluation process was presented at the Council of Great City Schools conference and that less than 25% of the districts in attendance had a priority for a student achievement goal, nor a research-based superintendent evaluation process. Supt. Nyland noted that the kinks are still being worked out and will continue to edit year to year. He noted the overall purpose is to get everyone working in the same direction. Supt. Nyland discussed his own responsibility on how to communicate the goals more effectively next year and though Seattle Public Schools (SPS) are ahead of many other districts, there are still opportunities for improvement. He thanked Erinn Bennett for her diligence and work on presenting and keeping the goals organized.

Directors asked Ms. Bennett for clarification on what the handouts are and for an introduction of today's process. Ms. Bennett gave an introduction on this item, and noted that this process has been going on since January, with updates and edits done in February, May and September. She noted the alignment of the SMART goals to each other, and that each SMART goal has a rubric and tiers associated within each section. She noted on the Evaluation Instrument, the shaded indicators are to call out which SMART goal has an associated rubric, and the non-shaded do not have a rubric associated. Ms. Bennett noted that the instrument is meant to be a multi-year tool and the shaded areas are the ones that they focused on this year.

SMART Goal #1: Michael Tolley and Shauna Heath provided a background on this goal. Mr. Tolley reminded the Board that this is a continuation goal; the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) have been worked on for over a year now. Ms. Heath noted that this year SPS is making significant progress toward reaching MTSS goals. She outlined the areas of improvement, as indicated on the handouts. She discussed the training and timeline for school leaders and teachers. She noted work with the Formative Training Institute, and cohorts moving toward autonomy with formative assessments and collaboration within each grade level. She noted that they are getting closer to closing the opportunity gaps.

Directors noted there are many outcome measurements, with not as many growth goals, and that they'd like to see the evaluations of the professional learning and some feedback from teachers. Ms. Heath noted that information is all available. Directors asked for a more holistic report on outcomes. Mr. Tolley noted that they look at multi-tiers, the first tier being instructional. This year it was broken out into two SMART goals MTSS-1 and MTSS-2. Within that, he noted that we look at strategies that teachers need to look at, collaborate with the assessments and look at the most effective instructional procedures, which leads to improved academic outcomes. Directors asked about "RULER" in the social and emotional literacy program. Mr. Tolley noted that it is a program where students are able to know how they are feeling and be able to self-regulate in order to avoid behavioral issues within the classroom. Ms. Heath noted that "RULER" is a program that is a part of a bigger program which Pat Sander and Bernardo Ruiz will discuss in more detail.

SMART Goal #2: Mr. Tolley and Bernardo Ruiz provided background on this goal. Mr. Tolley noted that this is the second MTSS goal; this one is on student behaviors. Mr. Ruiz noted that SPS met the goal to positively impact African American students and will continue to develop coherence throughout the District. The teams have begun building readiness for this program by looking at disaggregated data; however, each school had their own set of data for disproportionality and discipline. Mr. Ruiz noted that Supt. Nyland asked the team to look into closing the opportunity gaps, and in doing that they realized that they need to narrow their focus, to have a cohesive, coherent approach. Then to formulate a systemic plan to roll out to all underserved students within the District. Mr. Ruiz noted working with staff, the African American Males Think Tank, and the African American community for feedback on the plan itself and how to implement the plan. Mr. Ruiz further noted that they worked on positive outlier schools, and they explored which schools are doing a better job at closing the opportunity gaps, and utilizing that knowledge to identify the key things they are doing there to share across the District. He noted that this work has led them to cross-functionally work within the district to close the opportunity gaps, including the moratorium on elementary out-of-school suspensions. Mr. Ruiz noted that SPS has met the outcome goals, and will continue to work on key strategies to focus on all struggling students within the schools. Directors noted they would like some outcome measurements to be included. Mr. Ruiz noted that the rubric for next year shows the student outcomes. Ms. Bennett further noted that from previous feedback from the Board, the staff did go back and identify outcomes and measurables where possible, and that this is a work in process. Directors and staff discussed that this year's activities are foundational, and in future years we will be able to track and see how they have improved and see if they have hit proficiency. This was a planning year, and we will have more outcomes next year.

Mr. Tolley stated that they do believe the target of SMART goal 1 has been hit, within the limitations of funding. Directors asked what piece was impacted by funding. Mr. Tolley noted professional development. Ms. Heath also noted that the funding opportunities are also related to progress monitoring tools, access to data types at the school level with formative assessments, intervention strategies, and professional development to get to tier 2 and tier 3 on the rubric. Directors asked about formative assessments and testing, and what progress has been made. Ms. Heath noted to look at the presentation document

which shows the success criteria and closing the opportunity gaps, and noted that is what staff is trying to accomplish with the work being done with the Formative Training Institute.

SMART Goal #3: Pegi McEvoy provided a background on this goal. She noted the bell times operational considerations and community input that had been received. She noted the document identifies that the team has hit “basic” when it came to looking at large data on the national level. She noted the team hit “proficient” with the analysis, task force group and Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) group. Ms. McEvoy noted the timeline of the process and the equity analysis that was conducted. They are continuing to look at Phase 3, as they have continued to get community feedback. Staff feels they had met their goals and noted that staff was able to capture almost 50% of minorities through the N2N process. She noted the team is on target to provide additional information to the Board this week on whether to change the recommendation based on the feedback from the public, as well as the ability to opt in to the other tiers where applicable. Directors asked for clarification on the indicators that were represented in their input. Ms. McEvoy discussed N2N and making sure to create a way to get representative minority feedback from community meetings regionally, and online surveys to get representative sample of each ethnic group. Ms. McEvoy noted that staff came very close, although some minority groups were overrepresented and some were underrepresented. Directors thanked the team for their work in the community.

SMART Goal #4: Charles Wright provided background on this goal. He noted the organization level of readiness remains low. The goal was not met, however, the district did make some strides in this area. He noted the strides and improvements in the areas of kindergarteners at risk, the department of technology services to strengthen the disaster recovery system, the corrective action plan goal, and the mitigation strategy. Directors asked about the note on the document in regards to funding. Mr. Wright noted that the baseline said “basic minus.” He thought that they would have made more headway in certain categories had there not been gaps due to the funding not coming through or it coming through late in the year. Directors asked what tools SPS needs to reach targets on this goal. Mr. Wright noted that staff had generated a list of their needs, and it was to be brought to the cabinet at the end of August. He noted they were taking steps forward, but it became less of a priority at that time with everything else going on at SPS. This is not to take away credit from the activities, but they haven’t yet created the repeatable process, to consistently deliver the results. Directors asked what the price tag would be for this work. Mr. Wright noted that the overall budget was \$1.5 M, and that the tools are a piece of that budget. He noted that he didn’t have the specifics in front of him, and could get the additional information. Directors noted that to have mitigation risk strategies is very important to the District, and this can impact our students in the classroom and needs to be addressed.

SMART Goal #5: Charles Wright provided a background on this goal. He noted the baseline was at unsatisfactory level, as standardized processes weren’t in place. Throughout the year, staff has been trying to increase organizational readiness. They listened to school leaders, auditors, and parent feedback. Mr. Wright noted cracks in the foundation, and although they didn’t meet the target, they now have a service improvement

cycle in place to take in feedback on customer service and create focus groups with school leaders. He noted that SPS is now in the third year of surveys from school leaders. Staff has narrowed the feedback to the top list of processes that need to be improved. Mr. Wright noted experts from King County and the University of Washington had educated staff and leaders on operational processes. Mr. Wright noted that a Request for Proposal (RFP) had been done to identify the costs that it would take to improve the entire process from start to finish, however it did not move forward. Staff did the best they could with the resources that they had. He noted the rubric, and the areas where progress was made. He noted the continued work that is going on, and they will learn more from the survey results and the need to develop a systemic way to track the data and analysis. Directors asked for clarification on early hiring. Mr. Wright noted that for special education, staff was able to hit the goals at hiring for those key positions. He noted that although it was completed, it's not a systemic, repeatable process at this time. Brent Jones noted that we do and we don't have a system, and noted that a special education recruiter was temporarily hired that helped fill key positions. Systemically all of the pieces are not in place. Mr. Jones noted that we are using early outreach and early hiring, however, hitting that goal was based upon an additional Full Time Employee (FTE) that came in and did the hiring. We don't have that FTE in the budget.

Directors discussed how we get ahead and over communicate so that stakeholders feel like they have all of the information. They asked what the price tag would be for this work. Mr. Wright noted that the whole project again had the \$1.5M price tag, and they have the RFPs for the scope of all they want to do. Mr. Wright noted that once the department gets clear on what the design looks like, they will be able to assess the staffing levels. Many of the tools needed are related to technology, which are embedded in the levies, so if those pass some of the funding will go toward those needs. Directors asked for a master plan that shows dollar amounts tied to it, to see an actionable plan considering restraints and needs. Mr. Wright noted that when Boards change and Superintendents change, they lose continuity in the processes. Dir. Carr noted that Mr. Wright's team had come to the Board in the past with some of these needs and they were not passed onto the Board agenda for a vote, so the Board needs to be understanding of what growth can be done with those limitations. Directors noted for the record to show that they were supportive but at that time, they just couldn't move forward because no funding source for the proposal was identified. Mr. Wright noted that he learned a lot through the process, and asked about presenting again to the Board. Directors encouraged the team to address the questions and come back.

SMART Goal #6: Michael Tolley and Wyeth Jessee provided background on this goal. Mr. Jessee noted the four goals and 40 activity targets that were required to meet. He provided an overview of these four goals. He noted a new 220 page document for standard operating procedures in Special Education, which has been distributed to the special education staff and principals. Mr. Jesse noted the (Individualized Education Plans) IEP's and site visits by Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to make sure we are legally compliant. On recruiting, he noted that there has been a lot of turnover within this department, which further feeds the cycle of issues. He discussed issues with open positions as well as teachers leaving. He discussed professional development, and being

proactive instead of being reactive. Mr. Jesse noted the disproportionality within certain disability groups that students qualify for. Directors asked if it is the District's goal to have the special education students be career and college ready at the time of graduation. Mr. Jessee noted that the community has the expectation that they will be, and that readiness is defined differently for each student. He further noted that putting barriers on what students with disabilities can and can't do is something that we do not want to get in the business of.

Directors asked for the status of the \$3M being withheld during the process with OSPI. Mr. Jessee noted that this report shown today is regarding last year, and that the progress has been moving forward with OSPI this year. He noted that it is specific to regions, so we will learn if we meet the standards region by region. We have already met those for the northwest, so we are eligible for \$500,000 there. And, then we have to hit it for all six regions to have access to the \$3M. Directors asked where that money will come into play on our budget once we get it. Ken Gotsch noted that the money is in the budget as general fund, and will free up resources for something else.

SMART Goal #7: Charles Wright provided a background on this goal. Mr. Wright noted part A is focused on the school satisfaction survey, and part B is focused on the plan that the superintendent implemented. Part A goal has been achieved, and was completed on time. In regard to survey departments, they didn't hit the overall goal, but have been making progress in that area. He noted the rubric in the handout to measure the engagement, as well as the training involved. They are waiting to get the survey results to see improvement over last year, and should have it in the next few weeks. Directors asked about the standards for customer service, specifically if there was a recognition program for those who do a great job. Mr. Wright noted a few recognition pieces that they have for employees and volunteers, and the Superintendent Award. He noted that they did receive some feedback from staff on this.

SMART Goal #8: Mr. Wright provided a background on this goal. He noted this is on culture, and there is more green on this set of rubrics. He provided details of what goals were hit, including setting clear expectations for staff and leaders, competencies to guide staff activities, school and community partnerships and effectively leveraging community partnerships. Directors noted that the focus of this was to have quality personnel retained longer. Mr. Wright noted that at the Operations Data Dashboard meeting on Friday, they will go into full detail on the efforts underway. Directors complimented Carri Campbell on her work, and the coherent system to identify and understand who our partners are, what schools they serve, and what districts are impacted.

Erinn Bennett noted that many goals were multi-year goals, and many carry over, so it takes time to implement and achieve results. She noted that as Superintendent Nyland pointed out, that we continue to learn on this process, and to send feedback to help the process improve and continue to grow. Directors noted that SPS is on the leading edge, going beyond evaluation and focusing on the whole organization on clearly defined goals to track progress. They noted that it is an enormously important body of work, taking a lot of work over several years. Directors further noted that this process is the central

responsibility of the Board, and it's not trivial. There has been a tremendous amount of work that has gone in to this, and reflected on what the process looked years ago.

Executive Session: Evaluate the performance of a public employee

Director Carr announced at 6:20 PM the Board was going into executive session at 6:30 PM, after a 10 minute recess, to evaluate the performance of a public employee, and the meeting was scheduled for approximately 2 ½ hours, with an anticipated end time of 9:00 PM.

The special meeting recessed into executive session.

Director Carr called the executive session to order at 6:33 PM. Directors Blanford, Carr, Martin-Morris, McLaren, Peaslee and Peters were present. Staff present was Superintendent Larry Nyland. Also present was Michael Kenyon from Kenyon Disend PLLC.

At 9:05 PM, Director Carr announced that the executive session to evaluate the performance of a public employee was now expected to go an additional 20 minutes, with an anticipated end time of 9:25 PM.

At 9:25 PM, Director Carr recessed the Board out of the executive session.

The Special Meeting reconvened at 9:25 PM and there being no further business to come before the Board, Director Carr adjourned the Special Meeting at 9:25 PM.