

Board Special Meeting



2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134

Work Session: Early Learning/Seattle Preschool Program; and
Work Session: Superintendent SMART Goals #4 & #6 (Early Hiring & Customer Service)
Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 4:30-7:30pm
Auditorium, John Stanford Center

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm. All Directors were present. Staff present was Superintendent Larry Nyland, Director of Early Learning Cashel Toner, and Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning Michael Tolley, Assistant Superintendent Business & Finance Kenneth Gotsch, Assistant Superintendent for Facilities Flip Herndon

Work Session: Early Learning/Seattle Preschool Program

Dr. Nyland thanked everyone for attending, preschool program with city so far has been amazing. Dr. Nyland spoke about prospects for the preschool program over next few weeks and the next number of years and acknowledge main goal of closing opportunity gap.

Cashel Toner spoke about the District and city partnership for three city funded preschools in Seattle Public Schools (SPS). Conversation for the work session will be on renewing sites and expanding to add three or four additional sites. Ms. Toner spoke about giving as many students as possible tools and preparation for kindergarten. Representatives from the City of Seattle and principals from current preschools were also in attendance.

Ms. Toner introduced Dwayne Chappelle, with the City of Seattle. Ms. Toner welcomes principals from current preschool and introduces overview of SPS Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) and talking about three current classrooms with pauses for questions. Secondly, the next step for expansion will be discussed and finally the next steps moving forward. Ms. Toner spoke about slide three when the city voted with 70% approval for preschool in November 2014. Ms. Toner spoke about Board Members who were able to visit classrooms to see the social interactions, see children playing kitchen, make super heroes, and interacting with one another. Ms. Toner spoke about SPS have classrooms taught by SPS certified teachers and are supervised by building principals, and the program goes for six hours a day, five days a week. Preschool teachers are involved with all building personnel and these current locations make it a preschool to fifth grade building. Children have access to both breakfast and lunch at school as they would with any other student. Ms. Toner spoke about Seattle Public Schools Preschool Program integrations with other aspects of K-5 grade school. Ms. Toner introduces the SPP video.

Ms. Toner asked for questions:

Directors asked about an update for the three current classrooms and status of enrollment. Ms. Toner explained that Bailey Gatzert has 20 preschool students, Van Asselt has 18 preschool students, and Original Van Asselt has 20 preschool students.

Directors asked on now being six months into the year why were classrooms not filled at the beginning and what the process/demand of enrollment. Ms. Toner spoke about the timing of enrollment creating a challenge that has now been addressed with the experience of opening SPP classrooms. Ms. Toner spoke about providing notification to the community and communicating the offer of services. Ms. Toner spoke about community outreach and about the timeline.

Directors asked who is responsible for enrollment and outreach efforts. Ms. Toner answers the City is responsible for enrollment and that outreach is a collaborative effort. Ms. Toner also spoke about networking within the community of current preschool and with students who have younger siblings.

Directors asked how many Special Education (SPED) students are currently enrolled. Ms. Toner says two SPED children are currently benefiting from the program. Ms. Toner spoke about recruitment and application process for next year. Any family that lives within the Seattle city limits may apply. Directors spoke about being thrilled that she was able to see Ms. Toner make it happen with actually being at sites and being an active part.

Directors asked for direct examples for inclusivity and where the program is in terms of income diversity. Ms. Toner spoke about that best practice is diversity in all the ways would make most enriched learning environment. Preschool classrooms where services are offered are currently in diverse areas and looking at demographics of Bailey Gatzert, 98% free/reduced lunch (FRL). When looking at free/reduced lunch of preschool classrooms, it speaks to the neighborhood and community.

Directors asked about how many actual students will become SPS students once they complete the program and what is being done within program to keep recruitment for program. Ms. Toner spoke about one of the benchmark goals is alerting parents about transition into kindergarten and making sure that parents are aware of the enrollment process.

Directors asked about which of the schools have special education inclusion and which of the schools are comparable with one another. Ms. Toner explained that moving forward and blending programming has not been figured out but the conversations about next steps and implementations are currently taking place. Ms. Toner asks Principal Imel about SPED preschools. Principal Imel spoke about the collaborative efforts going on at the schools and how families appreciate the services and sharing back and forth. Families are already part of the community.

Directors spoke about last year's 25%, questions meeting benchmark and assumes that. Ms. Toner explained that 4 of the 9 benchmarks have been met and the ones that have not been met have not occurred on the timeline but the program is currently projected to meet goals.

Directors asked two questions: a) asked for feedback on Community Based Organizations (CBO) and how well the program is working for them. Directors asked if there is a same level of integrations and values at the SPP based at CBO. Ms. Leilani Dela Cruz says there are four CBO in school buildings and CBO's report strong ongoing relationships with the school staff and personnel. One site had a high turnover due to unforeseen circumstances but the staff has been actively building relationships with principals. Ms. De la Cruz spoke about kindergarten transition seems to go well and they have access to shared training and share professional development in school buildings. Directors spoke about how they were impressed with success of SPS SPP but wonders if CBO allows for that continuum.

Directors asked another question. Ms. Toner responds that Bailey Gatzert is a grant funded program and they proceeded with enrollment services. If three additional classrooms were to move forward, the additional classrooms would be enrolled by the City of Seattle. Ms. Toner spoke about the challenges of the program at first and how the City of Seattle and SPS were a little out of sync but biggest takeaway was about timing and continued collaboration.

Directors spoke about ordinance resolution and wondered what would happen if board voted to get rid of 25%. Ms. Toner thanks for reviewing ordinance and explains that she has control to earn 25% program milestones. The City of Seattle designed the budget framework.

Dr. Nyland spoke about being unable to solve the problem immediately. He does not think it is a current issue (from a programmatic or logistical standpoint).

Board stills needs to assess 25% funding risk. Ms. Toner spoke about the current 60 students served and if there will be capacity. Ms. Toner spoke about the data the City of Seattle gathered about gender, multi-lingual, racially diverse population, and serving low income children.

Ms. Toner spoke about the funding model for the SPP. Ms. Toner spoke about being on track to meet all the programmatic milestones.

Directors asked for clarification about the funding model and Ms. Toner spoke about the additional grant funding available to ensure against the 25% risk.

Directors asked about all the costs and if they were funded by the city. Ms. Toner says there is a line item for each one of the costs and says each one was accounted for. Dr. Nyland added the family and education levy gave us an agreed budget and agreed with teachers for a higher level of budget and it is currently in discussions with the city about this issue.

Linda Sebring spoke about the budget and how the data is based on an average salary cost because they don't know which teachers will be hired until an offer is made. Usually preschool teachers are newer to teaching and will cost less than the average.

Director Blanford spoke about using the actual cost of a teacher but base the budget on what they anticipate on happening. Ms. Sebring explained the budget is currently based on estimates. The grant will be charged the actual cost.

Directors asked to follow up with Dr. Nyland's statement. Dr. Nyland says the conversations have been floating around and the levy allows for \$35 million a year and doesn't include 6% salary increase. Dr. Nyland confirmed the programs together and put together all the expenses. The city made some accommodations to make sure we are reimbursed for all costs.

Directors asked about the budget, reimbursable costs and usable space that there is not a square usage fee. Dr. Nyland says we do not charge rent to any providers therefore the city is not charged rent either. Directors questioned if it should be a consideration that at some point, should SPS be compensated for the usage of square footage? Dr. Nyland explained from a policy standpoint, SPS has a 25%/75% in place for preschool funding to change this. They would have to rewrite another policy. Dr. Nyland spoke about how the city can make the same argument back in where if there was a charge and the city rent space for the seven city preschools in SPS facilities, that would be another source of funds to guarantee in the lock box that we would have money to go forward for any kind of performance. Dr. Nyland spoke about how SPS choose not go with that policy because it is challenging (CBO as non-profits).

Directors asked what are the financial implications for existing head start classroom. Ms. Toner explained we will get to that in the next part of the presentation.

Mr. Chappelle makes public comment that he is confident that 100% of the 25% holdback and introduces Monica Liang-Aguirre. Ms. Liang-Aguirre spoke about the entire levy funding in place, one that that the City and SPS makes sure that 100% of the reimbursement has been received.

Ms. Toner spoke about capacity. All the spaces are slated to be available and are based on one year commitment. The current three preschools are vetted with SPS capacity management and the budget is sound. Ms. Toner spoke about the potential to expand. Replicate our success with three new sites and ability to replicate. Now twice as many kids can be prepared for kindergarten. Ms. Toner spoke about the spaces that have been chosen are potentially available and there is grant funding for 25%.

Ms. Toner spoke about the same funding model. 75% initial allocation and moving onto programmatic milestones. What SPS didn't have before is experience and now that SPS has met those milestones and gained a year of experience moving forward. Ms. Toner explained SPS also has grant funds to ensure against the current landscape of funding. Ms. Toner says all space is reviewed annually. All space is a one year commitment and Ms. Toner would bring it back to the board next year. Potential sites for next year are Arbor Heights, Thornton Creek and also Boren K-7. Boren is currently housing two schools and once Arbor Heights moves out, there will be space. Highland Park's Head Start classroom will probably close due to high labor costs. SPS could fund the Highland Park preschool classroom with SPP funding.

Directors questioned about letting out a contract Arbor Heights. Ms. Toner says typically when we have a new opportunity; the new Arbor Heights school will have new multi-use space and preschool space. Flip Herndon spoke that there is space for a Before/After school care program; the space is flexible and space can be converted to a classroom. Dr. Herndon spoke about capacity challenges. Dr. Herndon spoke about a place like Arbor Heights would open and the school would have space to grow.

Directors asked how long Head Start are offered at Highland Park each week. Ms. Toner explained head Start is four days, half day. Directors asked if we switched out the model, 5 days, 6 hours, would Board agree that Highland Park is one of the neediest schools? The three schools not including Highland Park, SPS could offer them to CBO to run the Early Learning program. Arbor Heights is listed, is that the same for Highland Park and Boren. Ms. Toner responds yes.

Directors asked a question about space, do any of the sites currently have portables. Dr. Herndon and Ken Gotsch respond yes, they have many uses and they are used for elementary schools.

Directors asked if there is ever a situation where we put a K-5 child in a portable. Dr. Herndon explained even though funding is coming out of capital, that reduces possibility that coverage and city so putting portables takes away from actual play space.

Directors asked the city is looking to us to provide space we are currently running out of space and if there is a possibility of looking into community centers. Mr. Herndon spoke about one space that the city is looking at is the Miller Annex, even though it's being renovated, there is a space available that is planned to be used as Pre-K space.

Directors spoke about the need for a creating a program matrix and is there a rationale in proceeding, if a kid is enrolled in a program for a year instead of not a year at all. Ms. Toner will get back to the Board on the decision making matrix.

Directors asked six hours is a long time, does this include nap time. Ms. Toner responds yes and offers to send schedule.

Directors asked what role rigor has in the school day for this age. Ms. Toner spoke about how creating developmentally appropriate classrooms is on her agenda as the Director of Early Learning. Ms. Toner spoke about preschool uses High Scope model of learning. The child learns curriculum and interest based learning. Classrooms are encouraged to engage in social play. Ms. Toner spoke about best practices from birth to five and from five and up and how can a program push those up to grade level.

Directors asked about the research component. Ms. Toner explained the city is interested that the work and investment around preschool is implemented well and done well. In order to do so, the city and SPS has to be able to measure the success.

Directors asked is there a maximum space we will dedicate to the SPS preschool. Dr. Nyland explained there is no commitment to the city and would be reviewed every year with the board. Foreseeable space is available and in the current future. This is a challenge with the city and they came to us first and they go to the CBO.

Meeting recessed at 6:00pm for a break before the next work session. The meeting reconvened at 6:14pm.

Work Session: Superintendent SMART Goals #4: Early Hiring

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Clover Codd, introduced herself and the HR staff present for the work session: Executive Director of Talent Management, Adrian Byrd-Pina, Director of Employment Services Dana DeJarnatt and Manager of Recruitment, Retention and On Boarding Tim Collins.

Ms. Codd provided an overview of SMART goal #4. She discussed the goal itself and the rubrics used for measuring progress. Director Blanford asked if the rubrics used are aligned with what the Urban Schools Human Capital Academy (USHCA) identifies as a measure of high performing school districts. Ms. Codd responded yes, it is part of the academy's power metrics. Superintendent Nyland added that King County and the University of Washington's LEAN process also focuses on hiring early. Directors asked about the significance of the end of February date and if there is a later milestone. Ms. Codd discussed that February is an arbitrary date. Hiring season starts in April and though February is identified as a targeted early hire goal, HR will continue to work towards the goal of identifying and hiring quality candidates beyond February. Directors asked about the 90% target, if it was set using historical data to project forward, if adjustments will be made to that target, if there was consideration regarding class size reduction, and other factors that is representative of the needs for next year. Ms. DeJarnatt informed the Board that the District will meet the goal for our Phase 1 hiring process. HR is aware of the class size reduction and will continue to reach out and with full force to get the best and brightest teachers for next year.

Ms. Codd discussed the project governance and the role of staff for SMART goal #4. HR collaborates with other departments within the district and collects feedback as well as informs the stakeholders of the project status. Ms. Codd talked about what is included when measuring the progress of SMART goal #4 and what is outside of the scope. For example, SMART goal #4 is targeted on classroom-focused positions such as teachers, principals and assistant principals. HR will continue to hire positions such as instructional assistants, counselors, nurses and central office staff but the focus of SMART goal #4 does not include those efforts. Director Harris asked about current open positions. SMART goal #4 focuses on the positions for next year. Ms. Codd has the information and will share with the Board at the end of the presentation.

To manage the work regarding SMART goal #4, HR is partnering with the staff from Continuous Improvement: Guillermo Echeverria, Director and Doug Donaldson, Project Manager. The HR staff is getting into the habit of thinking with a project management discipline and LEAN, using in house resources.

All of the working documents regarding SMART goal #4 are on the SharePoint site. HR has a working visibility board that shows successes as well as what we are currently doing. The HR early hiring team has a stand-up meeting at 9am everyday to discuss updates to the action plan and meets with the larger working group weekly. Ms. Byrd-Pina discussed the meeting cadence to show how often meetings occur and which staff are involved at what levels in the organization.

Ms. Codd discussed the “push-pull” rhythm efforts. Individual staff do the work, team leaders ensure the work is done and how well this dynamic is for the overall team. Ms. Codd accredited Dr. Brent Jones, the former Assistant Superintendent of HR, now the Chief of Strategic Planning & Partnerships, for leading the work of SMART goal #4. Having recently been in the position a month or so, Ms. Codd wanted to ensure the Board was aware of the work Dr. Jones led in HR.

Mr. Collins talked about current progress to date. The district’s pool is nearing the goal and can be met earlier. The early hiring team wants to be sure we’re strategic with the numbers and not just hitting the target so the goal is met. SPS will have the high quality teachers, not just a pool of candidates.

Ms. DeJarnatt gave an overview of the hiring phases. The process is included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) but HR works with the Seattle Education Association (SEA) to determine dates of the phases each year. Phase I begins on March 28 and is for current certificated district employees and involves internal transfers. In the past, Phase I would have started as late May. Having it start in March is such progress towards SMART goal #4. Phase Ib allows individuals who have contingency contracts an opportunity to interview for open positions. Phase II offers displaced staff an opportunity to meet with Principals at the job fair. Job offers will be made based on their interviews. Remaining displaced classified staff is assigned based on seniority. Remaining certificated staff is assigned by the Executive Directors and HR staff. All displaced staff will be placed before moving to Phase III, open hiring, which is scheduled for May 23.

Directors discussed the phases for hiring and asked if there is any incentive to notify the district early regarding retirement. Ms. DeJarnatt informed the Board that language is included in the CBA regarding incentive if notification is given by February 1. Previous CBA language, did not allow for early hiring. Current CBA language benefits the district in filling hard to fill positions earlier, by being competitive and hiring early. Directors asked if there is data

regarding the demographic of staff of the district, with regard to people approaching retirement age and if there are efforts regarding retire / rehire. Mr. Collins discussed that the team is working on new initiative to gather the data regarding demographics. Ms. DeJarnatt informed the Board that HR does access the retire / rehire individuals after all other recruitment and hiring efforts are exhausted. There is current legislation regarding retire / rehire and anticipate that the district Board policy will align. Current Board policy limits offering retire / rehires to one year terms. Directors encouraged HR to gather the data on staff demographics sooner rather than later as they referenced a recent report regarding the make- up of the state's current teacher work force nearing retirement age. The District may not be different than that of the state.

Directors asked about early offers and how it is perceived by a new teacher. Ms. DeJarnatt discussed that the contract is not binding for SPS in that the contingency contract recipients are eligible to apply and interview during Phase IB. There are term limits set in the contract to aggressively compete with districts. If they do not receive a job offer at the end of June, the district is not obligated to give them one. The contract also does not promise a certain building or school site, due to CBA language. The recipients are aware the district wants to hire them by allowing them to apply in Phase IB. Certain contingency contracts, such as those for Special Education, do not have an expiration date since it is a hard to fill area and there is always a need.

Directors asked if there were diversity goals incorporated into the targets. Mr. Collins informed the Board that the local environment does not have the diversity pools to allow for incorporating diversity into hiring targets. The Recruitment team is looking at different options than what was used in the past. An example is initiating a virtual diversity career fair. This would allow for the push pull strategy that includes us pushing our brand out into sites such as LinkedIn and offering candidates a platform to pull themselves into the application process. The team already began discussions with LinkedIn who loved the idea, which has never been done before. Future work will include collaboration with Communications and really targeting areas like Chicago that are laying off teachers. This option will save money because it does not require travel expenses and brands Seattle as a vibrant up and coming city to work for and teach. The Recruitment team will continue to have a strong positive presence on social media and in person career fairs. A discussion occurred regarding how to better support our teachers of color – for recruiting and retention purposes. Ms. Codd discussed the current district programs such as STAR mentor, which is cohort based and focuses on retention. PAR is another effort that works with SEA and the Principal Association of Seattle Schools (PASS) partners to provide more systematic supports for teachers. The Evaluation Support Consulting Teacher (ESCT) program is another great source of support for teachers.

Ms. Byrd-Pina talked about the recent School Leader Meet & Greet that was held on Monday, February 22. Candidates interested in becoming principals or assistant principals in Seattle Schools had the opportunity to meet district leadership. There was an abundance of interest with a huge attendance. People from out of state flew in to attend. Superintendent Nyland discussed the great energy in the room and the excitement of the attendees. Mike Starosky talked about the great support for new administrators and it reinforced those interested to submit their application.

Directors asked the reason for losing school leaders and why the numbers are so high. Ms. Codd informed the Board that there has been a high retention rate for school leaders in the past year thanks to an effort led by Mr. Starosky. He then discussed that Novice principals have 1:1 coaching for three years as well as once a month training with their cohort members. The data prior to four years ago and the establishment of the Lead Up Program, SPS had a

novice principal retention rate of approximately 50% from year 2 to year 3. Last year was the first cohort of novice principals who received three full years of support. It resulted in an 85% retention rate for those principals being retained into their fourth year, nearly doubling the previous rates of novice principals. The data collected the last four years for novice principals has been that 100% of first year principals go from their first year into their second year, 100% of principals have gone from their second year into their third year, and 80% have went from their third year into their fourth year. Of those who left going into their fourth year, three of four left for promotions outside of SPS.

Superintendent Nyland discussed some of the opportunities to continue for early hiring. The two kinds of certification requests: emergency and conditional. Directors inquired about the parents already in schools and if there is an opportunity to fill the need for substitutes.

Work Session: Superintendent SMART Goals #6: Customer Service

Chief of Communications Officer, Jacque Coe and Manager of Customer Service & District Ombudsperson, Heidi Henderson-Lewis introduced themselves.

Ms. Coe discussed how great customer service begins with trust. It is essential in stakeholders and encompasses integrity, ability, intent. She talked about the elements of customer service and shared some of the things done to improve the district's customer service to stakeholders. One of the things is updating the FAQs page on our website. It is important to keep the information updated and relevant.

Ms. Henderson-Lewis opened up the conversation to ponder what would help make a sustainable plan. Board members offered feedback from their constituents saying that it is not just a specific area or service, it is organization wide. Ms. Coe reminded Board members that the focus of the work session is provide updates on the work of Communications and the Ombudsperson office, though the discussion regarding system wide improvements on customer service is relevant and needed.

Developing norms around customer service is occurring throughout different departments. Achievable standards are being discussed; such as response time to calls and emails. Current efforts are being done to create a customer service guide that offers employees tools and techniques. Ms. Byrd-Pina offered training on customer service last year and there are online trainings that could be offered as well to those interested. Ms. Coe also discussed the need for a feedback system such as comment cards or a survey that offers staff the information required to make improvements. Board members shared that student input is important to include; that it is important to remember the perspective of our parents and the community when providing service; having a communication protocol available for Principals to meet the needs of the parents in their specific buildings; that families should be able to find answers or get service in their buildings versus going down to the Stanford Center. Board members said that identifying the common pain points would be helpful, and develop a continuum of solutions that recognizes the varied needs of parents, rather than a complex one.

Ms. Coe informed the Board that there have been discussions regarding the varying needs of parents. Not all the regions within the city have the same needs. We are being mindful of the pain points in different regions. Ms. Coe also shared that there is a district wide family satisfaction survey sent out to families that include questions that run the gamut asking about engagement, access to information, the strategic plan and also includes open ended questions.

Board members requested that the website be better designed to find the information needed. Information is not readily available and there are too many clicks which results in frustration. Board members discussed the vision for customer service and the Ombudsperson. They shared how sometimes there is already mistrust of the organization. Ms. Coe introduced Pauline Amell Nash, the Web Content Editor. She is the Project Manager for the web refresh, which will involve a content audit of each page on the website ensuring that information is up to date and not duplicitous. The refresh is tentatively scheduled to launch in December of 2016 which will be an intuitive, simple, clean and attractive website that is easy to navigate. Board members requested the website include the previous School Board meeting agendas and minutes. Currently, the links to those documents are broken. Ms. Nash discussed the complexity and the length of time it requires to reload each of the documents. Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen informed Board members that he will find out the cost it will bear to complete this work ahead of the December 2016 launch, knowing that this work is a priority for the Board.

Ms. Coe shared that an email inbox was recently set up for people to share their positive experiences of the district. It is more often negative feedback is heard and it helps when those positive experiences are shared. The email address is kudos@seattleschools.org. It is a way for parents to give kudos and build that momentum for positive press. Communications is finding ways to share and promote (through social media channels, etc) that information and get it out to the public.

Board members asked about FEMA training and if there is any movement as a priority. Ms. Coe informed the Board that FEMA offers free online training for incidence response, it is a three hour training that helps the trainee understand incident command system.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12pm.