

Board special meeting

2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134



Work Session: Human Resources
Wednesday, May 11, 4:30 PM – 6:00 PM
Auditorium, John Stanford Center

Minutes

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm. Directors Blanford, Burke, Geary, Harris, and Peters were present. Director Pinkham arrived at 5:03 p.m. Director Patu arrived at 5:22 p.m. Staff present was Superintendent Larry Nyland, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Dr. Clover Codd, Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen, Director of Talent Management Adrian Byrd-Pina, Director of Employment Services Dana DeJarnatt, and Director of HR Data and Systems Michal Pearlstein.

Oversight Work Session Human Resources Department:

Vision: Department goals and objectives:

Dr. Clover Codd shared that today's presentation is showing what Human Resources is doing to align the department's goals to the District's Strategic Plan. Dr. Codd also mentioned that she is three months into this role.

In response to Directors' inquiry about deletions and edits to the PowerPoint, Dr. Codd clarified that the changes made were marginally relevant to the core purpose to the presentation. She indicated that she would be willing to share more detailed information on two slides that were not included in today's presentation at a different time.

Dr. Codd reviewed the Human Resources (HR) initiatives related to the district's Strategic Plan goals.

Substitute Recruitment: Dr. Codd provided an overview of the implementation of a new online substitute system AESOP as part of a strategy to reduce sub reimbursement costs. The department is working to develop a clear substitute strategy to fill positions in hard-to-fill schools and teaching positions.

Integrated systems: Dr. Codd pointed out that the department has several technology systems that do not connect and data quality is comprised. Also, disconnected systems lead to cumbersome and inefficient work arounds.

Non-represented Compensation Study: The department recently completed a long overdue non-rep compensation study. Dr. Codd called out that previously there were no standards in place for salaries and the district has not kept up with standards (as it has with represented staff).

HR Restructuring: Part of the restructuring requires streamlining processes. The Urban School Human Capital Academy (USHCA) has been very helpful with improving Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in order to align goals and strategies.

Improving complaint process: The department receives numerous complaints about how issues and conflicts are resolved at both JSCEE and in buildings. Employees have limited options when they find themselves in a difficult work environment. Their only option is to file a grievance or use the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) complaint process. HR is looking at an early dispute resolution process to deescalate conflicts before they are elevated to a level that requires costly investigations or legal action. The department is rethinking its procedures and policies that will be more supportive of our employees.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

Under current status, the red for “Reduce Substitute Costs” indicates that HR is not solely responsible for resolving this issue. Staff members addressed the high costs associated with substitutes. Tracking figures back to 2009, the district almost reached \$2 million in substitute costs which is a result of fail to fill reimbursements to the schools. At one point there were 600 vacancies in the schools. Dr. Codd pointed out that this is a system-wide problem that needs to be addressed because it continues to increase. There are, for example, too many teachers calling in sick the day before spring break. Every time a sub does not show up we have to pay the school and we have to pay for the teacher that is out sick.

Directors asked if there is a cost on the revenue side of a substitute not coming in. Mr. Nielsen added that the district gets a certain amount from the state but it does not cover all the costs and therefore requires drawing from other funds.

Directors asked if the numbers are significant, if this would impact revenues.

Dr. Nyland responded that the schools usually fill within the buildings and are required to do so.

Directors asked staff for a comparison of substitute rates with other districts.

Follow up: Dr. Codd referenced a national study that she will provide to the Board.

Dr. Nyland added that he is aware of a report that SPS is the only district that is not using emergency substitutes. SPS has difficulty finding substitutes in south end schools and suggested offering emergency certificates as a way to get people into schools.

Directors inquired about the banned substitute list. Dr. Codd explained that there is a process by which principals fill out a form and a substitute can be banned from the building. Staff present clarified that it is called the incident report and that HR is working with labor on this issue, however, it is not necessarily related to the sub shortage.

Directors asked whether the “Fail to Fill” should be considered as a KPI. The KPI would be increasing the attendance rate of teachers and suggested that this may be a training issue for teachers with implications for improving the quality of teaching.

Staff present showed a report that tracks teacher absenteeism. Dr. Codd followed up that the problem is much more complex than the fail to fill rate. She explained the issues around providing Professional Development (PD) during the work week and related costs and benefits. When teachers are taken out of schools for PD during the school day then there is an equity issue for the hard to fill and high needs schools. She also pointed out that the most effective PD

takes place at the school site during the day (as opposed to taking teachers off-site). This is why schools have Career Ladder teachers and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).

Directors asked to revisit the issue of the Fail to Fill rate and questioned if it might be an incentive for schools not to have a sub (if it generates money for the school). Dr. Codd explained that theoretically this could be the case but most schools would rather have a substitute in a classroom.

Director Pinkham arrived at 5:03 p.m.

Scorecard KPI:

Dr. Codd explained that HR's goal is to be effective and efficient by measuring outcomes. The department is building a scorecard to measure how many days it takes to hire a teacher from posting to placing. The goal is to track the days from offer letter to actual onboarding. The department also has a new process for intake and tracking evaluations.

Labor Relations is currently a "pain point" referencing the number of claims staff is required to case manage. Currently the department uses a manual case management system but it needs to have an enterprise system for tracking the number of days it takes to investigate and close a case. Metrics would help in analyzing effectiveness. Directors thanked Dr. Codd for her candor on this subject.

Directors asked about the KPI on retention and how the district measures the retention rate in high needs schools. They emphasized that this is one of the highest priorities and how important it is to figure out how the highest quality teachers are being retained. Dr. Codd explained that the district does measure performance and thanks to the levy it will be possible to do more analytical work in this area, especially with systems integration.

Directors asked if paying teachers more money is the driver to keep them at lower performance schools. If not pay, then what would the incentives be and how would this be addressed within the Collective Bargaining Agree (CBA) and interest based bargaining.

Dr. Codd said that the number one factor for retaining good teachers is the quality of the instructional leader at the building. If a principal is supportive and collaborative then teachers are more likely to stay at a school. Other factors include PD, culture, and investment in materials.

Directors asked if these factors could be addressed in the Seattle Education Association (SEA) CBA language and commented that one group hires teachers and one hires principals. If teacher satisfaction correlates with strong leadership in a building, then could the district look at hiring practices as a whole. They asked whether there is a "silo" issue in managing hiring of the two groups.

Dr. Codd responded that hiring a school leader is a multi-layered process that involves site-based hiring, staff culture, and the Education Directors EDs involvement in coaching and working with principals. Teachers are surveyed every year and their responses are gathered and analyzed by Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (REA).

Directors commented that there seemed to be a disconnect when trying to measure against something over which there is no control. They asked if teacher retention was reflected in the principal evaluation.

Service Delivery Model:

Dr. Codd emphasized that HR's delivery model is aimed at servicing schools. Staff present provided a high level view of the work under Talent Management and Recruitment, which also includes benefits, compensation, and retention. They explained how Employment Services works with principals to hire staff in the schools (which also includes district-wide delivery of all the bargaining processes and the Substitute Office). They also provided a brief description around data reporting and the smaller technology tools used to support the department (including Information Systems (HRIS, file room and the front desk).

Director Patu arrived at 5:22 p.m.

Dr. Codd gave an overview of the Labor and Employee Relations Department (currently the director position is unfilled) which includes working with business partners around employee misconduct.

Budget:

The slide shows both staff and non-staff dollars. Also new to HR is the work and budget for the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Program (TPEP) and Evaluation Support Consulting Teacher (ESCTs). These are two functions that belong in HR because they support the Human Capital goals of supporting teachers. Peer Assistance Review (PAR) is also new to HR. This is work that involves a new and collaborative relationship with our labor partner, SEA. In PAR, teachers are involved in shaping what the profession should look like. Dr. Codd emphasized that this "re-imagining" of professional growth shows that HR can be seen as a place where teachers can be supported.

Directors requested to go back to the Organizational Chart with specific reference to separating labor relations from employee relations and why they need to add more staff.

Dr. Codd explained that HR had suffered from staff cuts in the past and is now getting back to a level that can support the work.

Directors noticed that the HR budget, with almost 4 months left in the fiscal year, has almost no budget left. Dr. Codd said that there is a need to "right size" the budget. The district does not assess accurately if there is not enough money to do the work. Over the past 2 years, the department went over budget by about \$200,000. She mentioned that she, as well as department directors, are working through the service based budget process in order to secure funds. One of the biggest costs for the department is the back log in investigations.

Contracts:

Dr. Codd mentioned that additional contracts this year include MiraVia LLC for Danielson evaluation work and the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF). This is work in support of teachers, which she brought from her previous position in Strategic Planning.

Benchmarking:

HR is at the lower side of the spectrum. For the purposes of this slide, TPEP and consulting teachers were not included, though the percentages would have changed minimally.

Directors commented that this comparison is not fair because Seattle performs more functions than other HR departments. Dr. Codd replied that HR departments are organized in different ways. Some have benefits and some have payroll in HR. It is difficult to make apples to apples comparisons.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats:

In the area of strengths, Dr. Codd pointed that there is a wealth of institutional knowledge in the department and thanked previous Assistant Superintendent Dr. Brent Jones for developing a strong working partnership with Special Education.

Regarding the weaknesses, Directors asked about the effectiveness of early mediation and dispute resolutions. They asked for more research on this and stated that it is important for employees to be heard and listened to.

Follow Up: Dr. Codd said that she will follow up with this information on effectiveness of mediation and dispute resolutions.

She mentioned that early intervention would be a way to save money for the department and district. Dr. Codd recognized a member of the audience, Dave Westberg, Manager of Local 609, as someone who is bringing helpful suggestions to the department on this issue. She also said that they are trying to come up with solutions that work for employees. This is a good use of levy funds. Dr. Nyland added that the district can be smarter around preventive measures concerning employee disputes.

When speaking to Threats/Risks, Dr. Codd noted that data security and privacy is an issue. The department is not secured and is easily accessible for anyone to walk through. There is also a concern that HR could be a target for disgruntled employees who are upset and demonstrate their frustration inappropriate ways. Directors commented that they observed it is easy to walk through HR and wondered if the new signage is effective in restricting entry.

Dr. Codd spoke more about Key Information Technology and was forthcoming about the need for technology upgrades and that it is a constant challenge for HR.

In the area of Data Challenges, Dr. Codd pointed out that HR data systems do not talk to each other and that the department is always pulling from different places (the slide shows 11 different data sources).

Dr. Codd spoke to the department's Accomplishments:

Smart Goal 4 – Staff mentioned that the department succeeded its goal for early hiring. Hiring was moved up a month thanks to team work of Recruitment, Employment Services and SEA.

The online evaluation tool, eVAL, for certificated teachers is moving forward and will include all new teachers to the district beginning in fall.

Summative Evaluation Intake, the new process for tracking evaluation submissions, was implemented. Both schools and central office are participating. The department can now accurately report on the completion rate with confidence.

Seattle Teacher Residency (STR) has had 4 cohorts go through the program. Despite controversy surrounding the program, 47 of the teachers identify as people of color and the retention rate is at 100%. Dr. Codd gave credit to Tim Collins, Recruitment Manager, for his work with Seattle University and the Class to Cert program, which trains classified staff to become teachers.

Directors asked about key external controls, specifically around advertising for positions that serve Native American children and if there is a way to attach a preference to hiring certain teachers. Staff mentioned that they have been working with Gail Morris, Title VII Manager.

Directors ask about principal recruitment and whether the district reaches out enough to recruit “new blood” in order to get some of the competencies the district is looking for.

Directors also inquired about the low satisfaction ratings from principals regarding HR. Dr. Codd responded that it was low but that it is now improving and she recognizes that principals are the key customers that the department needs to serve.

Directors thank Dr. Codd and her team. They reaffirmed the need to prioritize early resolution in employee disputes.

Directors asked about due dates for summative evaluation intake, whether the due date is clearly articulated and if it is late, what it triggers. Dr. Codd replied that timelines and dates were clearly communicated through numerous channels, but consequences for not handing in evaluations on time have not been determined.

Directors asked where Executive Directors of Schools (EDs) fit on the organizational chart for evaluation and whether EDs were required to provide oversight presentation to the Board.

Dr. Codd explained that EDs evaluate and supervise the principals, and that Mike Starosky, Chief of Schools, supervises and evaluates the EDs. Each Assistant Superintendent is responsible for each department’s evaluations.

Dr. Nyland suggested that it has been 2 years since EDs presented to the Board and suggested a presentation by EDs should happen again soon.

Director Peters announced at 6:07 pm that the Board was immediately recessing the special meeting into executive session to discuss potential litigation and to evaluate the performance of a public employee, and the session was scheduled for approximately 90 minutes, with an anticipated end time of 7:35 pm.

Director Patu called the executive session to order at 6:14 PM. Directors Blanford, Burke, Geary, Harris, Patu, Peters, and Pinkham were present. Staff present was Superintendent Larry Nyland, Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen, General Counsel Noel Treat, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Clover Codd, Michael Tolley, John Cerqui, and Erinn Bennett

At 7:40 PM, Director Patu announced that the executive session to discuss potential litigation and to evaluate the performance of a public employee was now expected to go an additional 30 minutes, with an anticipated end time of 8:10 PM.

At 8:20 PM, Director Patu recessed out of the executive session.

The Special Meeting reconvened at 8:20 PM and there being no further business to come before the Board, Director Patu adjourned the special meeting at 8:20 PM.