

Board Special Meeting



2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134

Work Session: 2016/17 Board Governance Priorities and Superintendent SMART Goals
Tuesday, May 24, 2016, 5:30-7:00pm
Room 2750, John Stanford Center

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 pm. Directors Blanford, Burke, Patu, Peters, and Pinkham were present. Directors Geary and Harris were unable to attend. Staff present was Superintendent Larry Nyland, Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen, Associate Superintendent for Teaching & Learning Michael Tolley, Associate Superintendent for Facilities & Operations Flip Herndon, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Clover Codd, Chief Engagement Officer Carri Campbell, and Executive Director of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives Erinn Bennett.

Director Patu opened the meeting and Supt. Nyland provided his introduction to today's discussion. He noted the work being done on the current Superintendent Goals and also principal goals targeted on closing the opportunity gap as well as race and equity issues. He highlighted that the principal goals were not race-specific, and there is a need to have race-specific targets. He noted staff's work to have the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) work align out to all schools and spoke about ongoing work around grants targeted to make progress on the SMART goals.

Erinn Bennett noted the process for today and reviewed the documents provided, highlighting the timeline that calls out the steps for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 Board Governance Priorities and Superintendent SMART Goals. Today's goal is to narrow down to 6 goals, and identify what other information is needed before the June 4th meeting, where the goals will be narrowed down further. Stephen Nielsen noted the May 25th budget work session and the targeted issues to be discussed then that will need to be aligned with the SMART Goals. Ms. Bennett continued to review the steps for tonight's meeting and called out that the Goals provided are in draft form. She noted that with the goals, even if something isn't selected, it doesn't mean the work stops, but it just isn't a specific focus of the Board. She spoke to the March 12th retreat where brainstorming took place for possible 16-17 goals. Ms. Bennett explained the color designations for the different goals. She reemphasized that the goals provided are draft goals and today's meeting is not to word-smith the documents, but to just give the Board possible ideas as a starting point. She noted that there will be 15-16 and 16-17 goals overlapping as the transition happens between the current and new evaluation cycles.

DRAFT 16-17 Goals

- Goal 1, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) – Michael Tolley spoke about this draft goal, which builds on work that is ongoing, noting two of the 15-16 goals are related to MTSS. The main focus is to put systems, structures and practices into place district-wide, and this goal combines some of the work of the 15-16 MTSS goals. Directors asked for clarity on what the 15-16 MTSS A and B goals encompass, and Mr. Tolley noted A is related to academic support, and B is related to socio- and emotional support. Mr. Tolley also spoke about the different places where MTSS work happens in the system. Directors noted that the A and B goals were highlighted before as separate work, and asked if there was an opportunity cost to combining them into this goal. Mr. Tolley spoke about how this goal would be focused on serving the whole child, both academically and emotionally.
- Goal 2, Transforming Attitudes, Beliefs & Actions – Michael Tolley spoke about pulling out a body of work to significantly increase positive outcomes for African American males and other students of color. He noted this is related to targeted universalism, to change the culture and climate that students experience, through changing the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of adults to have a significant impact on students. Directors asked about the difference in this goal and the MTSS B goal. Mr. Tolley noted this is more about changing adult attitudes and beliefs,

whereas this year was a combination of adults and students, through MTSS A and B. Directors asked if Goals 1 and 2 could be combined and if they are complementary. Mr. Tolley noted that they could be, but clarified that they are two big bodies of work that focus on two different areas. Directors then asked if Goal 2 and 8 could be combined, and Clover Codd noted they will speak to Goal 8 later in the meeting, which will highlight the differences. Mr. Tolley noted this work is critical and needs to happen. SMART Goals are what the Board continually monitors and on which it gets feedback. Directors spoke about what they had heard in staff's presentation, and if goals were linked together, it could cause a dilution of focus and have an impact on the goal. Directors asked whether Goals 1 or 2 address systems, such as policies and procedures. Mr. Tolley noted that would be Goal 1. Directors spoke about hearing what is working that we want to maintain and what needs to change. Supt. Nyland spoke about MTSS and building good systems in classrooms, which touches a majority of students, and getting better at making those systems work, but how more work is needed in identifying students that need additional support, who aren't being served in the existing system. By changing the perspective, we can help to not just focus on behavior issues. Directors noted it is predicated on school leaders knowing what to do, and arguments have been made that they don't have that skill, and also noted a good distribution system is needed to replicate what is working across the system, and there have been critiques that we don't have a good system to do that. They noted the need to have intentionality and focus. Directors spoke about their experiences with students and as much as we might believe in them, but we still need to determine the right formula that enables the student to learn.

- Goal 3, Special Education Continuum of Services – Michael Tolley spoke about how Special Education has been a focus in the last two years of Superintendent SMART Goals, through the Comprehensive Corrective Action Plan (C-CAP), the Revised Comprehensive Corrective Action Plan (RC-CAP), and the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to ensure changes from the C-CAP were being implemented. That work was a focus on compliance and making sure systemic structures were in place. For 16-17, the work would be a shift towards a focus on ensuring high quality instructional services for students with disabilities. It was noted this goal was recommended by at least one Board member to continue this work. Staff spoke about the implementation of a joint task force with the Seattle Education Association (SEA) for continuum of services, which shifts away from programs that are offered to looking at Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) to make sure services are available in the building to serve the students. Directors noted previous updates to the Curriculum & Instruction Policy (C&I) Committee and if the Board had any other update opportunities. Ms. Bennett noted the work session after the 15-16 SMART Goals were adopted, and another possible update at a Board meeting. Supt. Nyland noted Friday Memos have also called out some of the progress made. Ms. Bennett confirmed that the C&I Committee still receives the updates. Directors asked if there is an accountability piece to show changes that have occurred and how to look at that information. Mr. Tolley reviewed what the current goals target, and the ultimate success measure is student outcomes and changing of discipline disproportionality numbers to see if we are getting the expected results. Directors asked when the data is provided and Mr. Tolley noted it comes via the annual district scorecard. Dir. Burke spoke to feedback provided from Dirs. Geary and Harris on this goal. Ms. Bennett noted how the list of draft goals was put together based on prior Director feedback on possible goals.
- Goal 4, 24 High School Credits & Increasing K-12 Instructional 20 minutes – Michael Tolley spoke about the two-year waiver for implementing 24 high school credits, with a 2017-18 start for incoming freshman. He noted that is also the same year where the SEA contract calls for a 20 minute increase to K-12 instructional time, and both items require negotiation with labor partners, as well as considerable prep work to implement. He noted the task force to study implementing 24 high school credits and recommendations received. Directors commented on a ranking of the district for lower instructional time as compared to other districts and how there is opportunity to improve our standing. Directors noted 24 high school credits is a state mandate, and 20 mins are an SEA contract requirement, and asked why it should be a goal if this work must be done. Mr. Tolley noted this is a significant body of work, and the Board may want to remain more aware of the work as it progresses towards implementation. Ms. Bennett

noted there are multiple Board policies that will need to be reviewed in implementing this work as well. Directors asked if the timing of the work aligns well with the goals timeline, and staff noted that the work has multiple steps and phases to work through, and staff will work to have the policy work go earlier, to allow for extending timelines if needed.

- Goal 5, Budget/Funding – Stephen Nielsen noted “this is the year of McCleary” and the district will need money to do everything noted in the goals, but does not have the money to do it all. He noted that this is a lot of staff work, will need Board support, and spoke about the work this summer to engage stakeholders in a review of funding and how we spend our money, as well as allocations to schools, and how we accomplish what we want to do to support these goals. Mr. Nielsen noted there are no easy answers when it comes to funding, and we need to lobby the legislature for more funding and have a concerted effort on community engagement. In the meantime, there will also be work sessions on what is learned from stakeholder engagement, and a lot more involvement in budget work sessions, so staff can easily address whatever happens in legislative session. Directors asked if the theory of action is we learn more if we engage with our stakeholders so they understand our challenges, in hopes they will rally to push the legislature to fully fund, and to have more detail. Directors asked if it is appropriate to have a SMART goal around political work and Mr. Nielsen noted the Board can make non-editorial statements on the importance of funding, but just couldn’t say to vote for a specific item. Care needs to be taken on how it is done, but there is nothing wrong to say we need more funding for these reasons, such as we can’t meet student achievement goals with current funding. Also individual Directors can say they are speaking for themselves, but they would have to be careful to be clear it is a personal, individual statement. Directors spoke about the approach to look at how money is allocated in the district, looking at how things are funded and analyze what is working, what is essential and what is non-essential. Directors noted work by staff to look at effectiveness of programs and Mr. Tolley noted how Research and Evaluation is providing supports to departments to determine what goals they have and evaluating systems to measure how they are performing. Mr. Nielsen noted the new CFO’s review of tomorrow’s budget work session presentation, and spoke about how she will give a fresh set of eyes on what is effective in the district.
- Goal 6, Building Capacity – Ms. Bennett noted that Director Harris had flagged this goal as a point of interest for her. Flip Herndon spoke about work across departments and the capacity task force to address increased enrollment. He noted two major pressures of space availability and class size reductions, and also around being able to serve before/after school needs for the community. He clarified this is more of a logistical goal and not necessarily to close the opportunity gap. Dr. Herndon noted the next BEX cycle in 2019. Directors asked about cycles for levy projects, and what are leverage points where the Board could provide support that adds benefit. Dr. Herndon noted challenges called out by the community and as enrollment grows and class sizes shrinks, other spaces will need to be used and we will need revenue sources to address these areas. He noted that for this coming year, we are getting 4 classrooms worth of funding from the state. Directors asked how this was aligned to the governance priority of improving systems and supports and Dr. Herndon noted how this goal would tie in.
- Goal 7, Engagement – Ms. Bennett noted this is a revision of a 15-16 goal around customer service, and Directors Geary and Harris had flagged that 15-16 goal. Carri Campbell spoke about this being a continuation of a prior goal, and noted the components of the goal around a broader framework on decision making, how community is engaged, 5 potential elements on how to engage, develop cultural responsive tools, etc. Directors asked if this would include home language translations, Ms. Campbell noted what would also be discussed at the June 4th retreat in this area, including ways people want to be engaged.
- Goal 8, Professional Practice – Clover Codd noted how the last goal is always a professional practice, and how this one would be around collaboration and problem solving. It is a multi-pronged strategy where employees feel engaged, like MTSS but for adults in professional practice. Staff should have the tools, skills and training to solve problems, which is an expectation of leaders, and some of the goal’s work would be how to design an early dispute resolution process to keep conflicts from coming to Legal and HR early on. She noted this approach would include changing policies and procedures around this and leader training. Dr. Codd noted how this goal differs from Goal 2, to address the earlier Director question on

whether these two goals could be combined. Directors asked about a district policy on complaints and investigations, and Dr. Codd noted the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying policy which has an adult component, and how that has triggered more complaints. She noted that every complaint received requires an investigation, according to the procedure. Supt. Nyland spoke to how Goals 7 and 8 align. Directors thanked staff for the comparison to the MTSS mindset, and providing early resolutions to issues.

Additional Goal Ideas or Edits

Erinn Bennett asked Directors if they had any additional goal ideas or edits to the goals presented, noting the line of Board Governance Priorities and the difference from the 15-16 Priorities. Director Burke noted he wanted to see the district do better in the area of STEM for broader high school opportunities and career pathways. Staff asked if it could fit under the 24 credit discussion, and Mr. Tolley noted conversations with principals on how to do high school differently and provide those other credit opportunities for students. Dir. Burke noted his reason to have this called out more explicitly. Ms. Bennett noted the importance of all of the goals presented and the difficulty in whittling them down.

Dir. Peters spoke to the March 12 minutes, related to combining Career & Technical Education (CTE), alternative schools, and STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math). Dir. Burke spoke about how to keep students engaged and thinking beyond K-12. Dir. Blanford spoke about the synergy of 24 credits and increasing instructional time, and how to prepare students for post-graduation, rather than adding another goal. Mr. Tolley noted he feels this work would fall within Goal 4 - if we are able to implement the trimester system, students would have more choices and we would increase the number of courses offered. He suggested adding College and Career Pathways to the goal. Directors asked about the goals from 14-15, and Ms. Bennett noted the governance priorities and SMART goals for that year. Directors and staff spoke about trajectory benders and the importance of a college and career pathway. Directors asked if Goal 4 could shift to increasing High School Graduation rates as a larger umbrella. Mr. Tolley spoke about how that is a K-12 effort and doesn't just begin in high school, and how foci at different points in the student's career can impact their likelihood to graduate. Supt. Nyland spoke about how the idea of increasing pathways could serve as a larger goal idea, to include the 24 credit/20 minutes work.

Director Peters left at 6:59 pm.

Ms. Bennett clarified the theme of increasing graduation rates, but keeping Goal 4 as 24 credit/20 minutes. Mr. Tolley noted the longer range 5 year goal towards increasing graduation rates, and having foci on multiple options at all grade levels, to keep it front of mind but not necessarily a goal.

Erinn Bennett then asked Directors to prioritize their top 4 goals, with the intention of narrowing the list down to 6. Directors commented on how there is always a professional practice goal, and Ms. Bennett noted Directors could select their top 4 from the first 7 goals. Director Burke selected Goals 1, 2, 4, and 7. Director Blanford selected Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4. Director Pinkham selected Goals 1, 2, 3, and 7. Director Patu selected Goals 2, 4, 5, and 8, and noted that Director Peters had indicated Goals 2 and 5. Ms. Bennett noted the themes around Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7, as a starting point for the 6 goals to review at the June 4th Retreat.

Identifying Additional Information Needed

Erinn Bennett then asked Directors and staff to provide feedback on what criteria or information is needed for the June 4th Board retreat discussion to help narrow down the list further. She noted some factors could include financial impact, duration (multi-year), how much engagement, and impact on students. Directors asked about the multi-year designation and Ms. Bennett noted that could be used for a starting place for the 17-18 Goals. Directors and staff discussed how multi-year is defined. Directors asked to have more people weigh in on theory of actions and sight lines to students on these goals, how these goals get into classrooms and the quantity of students touched, and to have staff rank the goals.

Next Steps

Erinn Bennett reviewed the next steps in the process, noting the June 4th retreat to narrow the list, and then the June 29th work session to define language and rubrics.

The meeting adjourned at 7:17 pm.