

Board Special Meeting



2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134

Work Session: 2015-2016 Superintendent Evaluation Check-In; Executive Session
Thursday, June 29, 2016, 4:30-7:00pm*
Auditorium, John Stanford Center

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 4:33pm. Directors Blanford, Burke, Geary, Harris, Patu and Pinkham were present. Director Peters was present by phone. The meeting was staffed by Superintendent Larry Nyland and Executive Director of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives Erinn Bennett.

Work Session

Erinn Bennett provided an overview of the evening's agenda and noted this was the last year that the annual evaluation would be in November and that it would occur in June thereafter. Ms. Bennett discussed the timing and alignment of the SMART Goals and noted the contributions of staff in assisting with these goals. Superintendent Larry Nyland provided information on the work Cabinet members and staff are doing to connect SMART Goals of departments with Board Governance Priorities. He further noted discussions with staff about working as a team to make these goals a reality and turning ideas into action.

- **2015-16 Superintendent Evaluation Check-In**

Erinn Bennett provided an overview of the process that went into the review of each goal. Director Blanford asked for clarity of the order in which the Goals will be reviewed. Ms. Bennett suggested discussing each goal and then allowing time for questions at the end of each goal overview.

Goal 1: Michael Tolley provided an overview of the Department's efforts to close the opportunity gap through this goal. He further noted that this strategic goal builds upon prior strategic Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) plans and common core assessment and development tools. He provided more detail into what the goal asks and discussed the work teachers are doing to meet this goal. He noted the limited resources available for MTSS programs. Mr. Tolley noted the department was currently recruiting new schools to continue the implementation of successful MTSS pilot programs into more schools this upcoming year. Erinn Bennett noted Director Harris' questions regarding the \$11M one-time fund dollars. Mr. Tolley noted that they will continue to move forward with the limited funds currently available. Directors and staff discussed how long the District has been implementing MTSS process. Mr. Tolley noted that in some form or another, MTSS has been utilized for nine years. He further noted that funding has not always been prioritized for programs which support the progress of these goals. Director Peters requested clarification on the evidence of which MTSS program supports the outcomes the district is looking for. Mr. Tolley noted the intervention programs can range from classroom based intervention methods to extra staff support for the student. He discussed the different ways schools implement

these interventions and that it was a matter of the individual school selecting the method that worked best to support their students. He noted the goal is helping teachers understand what the standards are and improving instructional practice within the classroom to address the student's needs at that level rather than moving into an intervention. Director Burke noted his understanding of MTSS and noted that the District has not presented a cohesive vision of what MTSS looks like. He provided further input on difference between some schools that have mastered the "PowerPoint" model of MTSS and others that are implementing some portions but without complete understanding of the entire vision. Dir. Burke further noted his concerned that the District is still looking to define how these things are done when some schools have been implementing this structure already. He expressed the need for input and feedback from the schools. He conveyed his enthusiasm for the work being done but noted his concerns about focus of intentionality of the structure. Mr. Tolley discussed some of the work in place to assist in making this more cohesive. Dir. Harris noted her agreement with Dir. Burke and expressed the need for schools to learn from each other and not re-create the wheel. Mr. Tolley noted a meeting of central staff and principals that is designed to do just that. He further noted the major reason the District is struggling to move this forward is due to limited funding, as much of the funding depends on Levy dollars. Director Peters asked for information on evidence that MTSS is reducing the opportunity gap. Mr. Tolley noted that the main focus is on professional development and teaching the standards.

Goal 2: Erinn Bennett welcomed Pat Sander and Brent Jones to the table to assist in the discussion of Goal 2. Michael Tolley noted that MTSS-B was added as a social emotional component. He further noted the focus on changing the culture and environment within the school and the variety of components that go into achieving this focus. He discussed the close tie-in building a student behavioral supports department to meet the demand in achieving this goal. Pat Sander discussed a variety of ways the department is increasing staffing capacity through professional development and hiring as well as developing more equity teams across the district. Staff provided an overview of the preventative focus of this goal and the utilization and implementation of the Racial Equity Tool. Staff discussed the positive behavioral support frameworks implemented as assessments for schools to use and noted some of the feedback received from schools.

Ms. Sander highlighted the work of Erin Romanuk in obtaining community and student input in the Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Director Patu asked what tools were being used to measure success. Ms. Sander provided information on different ways that are utilized to assess the behavior, social emotional and safety of students. She further noted that success can also be seen in the reduction of student suspensions and building of more positive relationships. Director Pinkham requested further information on professional development provided to staff. Directors and staff discussed how schools were selected for the equity team. Mr. Tolley noted the obstacles to providing professional development to all teachers, especially when the training is not mandatory. Director Blanford noted the lack of a real clear theory of action and problem statement and asked when there will be one. He noted his concern that the work is actually addressing the problem and not just being guised as equitable. Dr. Nyland noted there is a lot of work still needed to identify the framework as well as create the opportunity for schools to learn together. He further noted that principals are working to find creative ways to get all of their staff to take the professional

development. He further noted some schools struggle with the resources that would allow them to implement the programs once they are trained on them. He further highlighted the need to continue to coach and develop these programs.

Director Blanford asked for clarification on the separation of responsibility from the central office and individual schools. He noted the need for an efficient, clear, common theory of action from the central office. Dr. Nyland acknowledged the role of a clear road map. Director Harris asked for information on the role of the Executive Director and what assessment and accountability tools are used for principals. Directors noted the necessity for a clearly articulated plan of action. Brent Jones noted with more participation from principals then the more they will be invested in the success of the program implementation. Directors noted that after nine years of working with MTSS that there needs to be a clear goal and direction that aligns with the end goal of the District.

Goal 3: Wyeth Jessee reported on the Memorandum of Understanding between Seattle Schools and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). He noted last year's revision of the action plan helped develop procedures per OSPI's review. He noted all verification standards as set by OSPI have been met. He highlighted the collaborative efforts of staff to get to this assessment by OSPI. Mr. Jessee provided further information on the next steps and review of individual outcomes. He noted that the department is working toward sustainable practices.

Goal 4: Clover Codd provided information on the successes of this goal and the intent of moving early hiring up. She further noted the department met multiple hiring goals and discussed the recruiting efforts towards hiring a diverse principal and teaching corps that accurately reflects the community of Seattle. She highlighted the collaborative efforts between departments to hire quality employees. Dir. Blanford asked if there was any negative to moving the hiring schedule. Dr. Codd noted that the opportunity cost currently seen is the burnout of Human Resource staff in meeting the high demand of the hiring process. She noted the pride the department feels in meeting the goals but acknowledged that the consequence is the toll it takes on staff. Dir. Geary noted the benefit to moving the schedule up would be to have less of the process occurring right before school starts. Dr. Codd indicated that in theory, less positions would be open in August by using this process, however she noted that hard to fill positions were still difficult to fill. She indicated she would provide an update on these positions in a Friday Memo. Directors and staff discussed the difficulties in the recruiting and hiring process in conjunction with the high cost of living in Seattle.

Goal 5: Pegi McEvoy provided an update on the Bell Times goal and noted the steps going forward to address areas of mitigation. She noted that a check list was sent to schools regarding additional supports that they may need as well as suggested options that might help mitigate these issues. She noted they are in the process of reviewing the lists that have come back from schools and planning out the next steps from there. She noted they are looking at how to assess the benefits to changing the bell times and indicated further information will be forthcoming. Dir. Harris asked if the City of Seattle Parks and Recreation Department was helping to alleviate any of the child care challenges presented by the bell times change. Ms. McEvoy noted that they were. Dir. Harris requested an update in a Friday Memo. Directors and staff discussed the

measures in place to assist in data collection for assessing the benefits or disadvantages of the bell time changes.

Goal 6: Carri Campbell noted the goal's focus around customer service and communication. She noted the slow and steady progress of completing this goal and acknowledged the amount of training involved. She provided an overview of the progress of this goal and noted the gradual progress was obtainable but feels like we can make gradual progress but without need for financial support to continue or speed up the process. Ms. Campbell noted a lot of the goal is subject to professional development and lack of funding can affect the speed of progress.

Goal 7: Dr. Nyland noted the similarity between goals 6 & 7. He noted that all of cabinet have goals that align with the Board Governance Priorities. He noted the intent that action plans focus on making a difference and working with principals for a more collaborative model. Dr. Nyland provided more information on how they are working to work more closely with principals and community members to improve their engagement in the process of developing a program. He noted that more principals had been involved in the planning and professional development process.

This meeting recessed at 5:56pm. The meeting was reconvened at 6:08pm.

- **2016-17 Superintendent SMART Goals**

Erinn Bennett provided an overview of the process for building the Superintendent SMART Goals for the 2016-17 year and noted the structure of the meeting. She indicated the anticipated introduction of this topic would be at the August 24th meeting. Director Peters asked if feedback could be provided by email, which Ms. Bennett indicated she would be the point person for all feedback and follow-up questions.

Goal 1: Michael Tolley noted the carry-over work on MTSS. Wyeth Jessee spoke on the collaborative efforts to meet the four categories within the SMART Goal. He noted the teacher and staff excitement around MTSS and noted the push toward proficiency in all four categories. Mr. Jessee discussed ways to make more structural cohesiveness and working around the whole child framework. He further noted working with school leaders to get feedback about the next steps and then would move forward with implementation. Director Harris asked if Advanced Learning (AL) and Highly Capable students were included in this discussion. Mr. Jessee noted that MTSS is designed to address individual student needs. Director Blanford noted he would like to see the evidence provided across the rubric and not just for a few. He noted the need to maintain consistency in language across the rubric and be as specific as possible. Director Peters asked about qualifying distinguished with only 5 schools participating. Mr. Jessee noted that most schools are in the emerging category and are not ready to be demonstration sites. He discussed the complexity to obtaining data for success as MTSS is designed as a grassroots program with the outliers doing the work. He further noted that in order for schools to meet the distinguished level of being demonstration sites they would have to be experts. Director Geary asked why African American males are not specifically reflected at some level in the Basic or Proficient category. Dr. Nyland noted that in some cases the schools are doing a really robust job of providing an overall focus and others are focusing on a more targeted student population. He noted the value in both strategies. Director Blanford noted the need to work on both at the

same time. Director Burke proposed a 5th category called “definitions”. Director Peters indicated she would like to see language in the framework that clearly implements successful methods with positive results. Directors noted the goal’s focus seems to be on the process rather than the results and would like language that includes evidence and results. Director Geary expressed her concern about including AL and identifying specific groups of people within the goal and the message that could send to students who do not identify with the group in which we have listed. Director Burke noted that the intent of including AL is not to specifically identify groups of students, but rather that if AL is a component of MTSS, then the District should look at strategies to incorporate the advancement of those students. Mr. Jessee clarified that if there were going to be a definitions section that it would be a range of learners. Director Blanford conveyed that the District would be changing the philosophy of MTSS if it singled out one particular group over another. Director Geary expressed the expectation is that any student, regardless of identity, if they want access to different opportunities that the District would provide them that and that the District try to look for really creative and challenging opportunities for all of our kids.

Goal 2: Pat Sander indicated that there is a continued focus on the attitudes, beliefs, and actions while incorporating student voice and meeting the requirements in the proficient column. She further discussed the accountability row which concentrates on addressing the social and emotional safety of students. Brent Jones discussed the equity portion of this SMART Goal and noted the common language and shared knowledge focus and looking at aggregated positive outlier schools so that information can be shared throughout the District. He discussed the professional development component of achieving this goal and continually looking for and matching resources to promote the efforts of this goal. Ms. Sander discussed the nesting of this goal into the MTSS framework and the continued effort to align the two. Director Harris noted need to utilize the website as a reporting tool. Director Peters noted her concerns regarding the goal outlined under the distinguished column in the professional development row and suggested that the goal be moved into the proficient. She further noted that this is a priority and sense of urgency around this goal and the need to see movement forward by 2017. Ms. Sander noted the intent was that the resources needed to implement this goal will be available in the 2017-2018 budget. Director Peters noted that these things should be happening at the same time and asked for clarity around “access” and “receiving”. Mr. Tolley noted that even though students have access to services, they may not take advantage of the opportunity. Director Geary noted that the goal is to measure the outcomes. Director Blanford asked how the District planned on making high rigor classes accessible in a way that students will choose to receive it. He noted that it is not just enough that the District offers International Baccalaureate classes, the District also has to have a way to engage students who would not normally want to sign-up for these courses.

Goal 3- Erinn Bennett noted that this goal was originally goal 9, but is now goal 3. Flip Herndon discussed the focus of this goal as program mapping and review. He noted the intent is to meet the distinguished level. He noted his team is looking into ways to track the data and present it in a dynamic and functional way. Eric Anderson discussed the design and pilot program review cycle process to have a better understanding of the accuracy and proficiency of information. He noted that the District is doing more in-depth analysis of multiple programs and surveys and other qualitative analysis that would statistically identify or isolate the effects of individual program. He noted the need

for additional staff and budget in order to complete the goal fully and expeditiously. Director Harris noted she sees this as a continuum issue of taking a look at the District's portfolio to see what we are offering and where we could do better. Director Geary noted that she would also like to see sustainability and equity in the goals that go beyond the review. Director Burke noted the sooner the District starts the work the better. Mr. Anderson noted that the delay in obtaining this information is due to staffing needs. Directors and staff discussed the staffing component to completing this goal and what the potential needs are. Directors noted they are looking for an action plan to sustain and support these pathways.

Goal 4: JoLynn Berge noted that this goal is shared with finance and government relations. She discussed the goal and analysis of the goals for the 17-18 budget. She noted the dates within the document were set based upon potential set-backs due to the legislative calendar. Ms. Berge discussed the 6 elements within the goal, noting that 4 were legislative focused and 2 focused on community engagement. She acknowledged the feedback she received from Board members at prior budget work sessions. Stephen Nielsen asked for clarification on the outside audit of the budget and noted that there are many ways to audit the budget. Director Blanford asked for clarification on what the SMART Goal actually was. Erinn Bennett noted the goal is to focus on engaging in state level policy discussions and working with state leg around *McCleary* while engaging the community and other stakeholders in the process. Mr. Nielsen noted that the idea is to gain public support with the realization that the District cannot do the work alone and needs to liaise and collaborate with people around the state. He further noted that the District should always be evaluating the budget and that the current budget is a roll over, business as usual, budget. He further noted that extraordinary efforts are necessary with the issues around *McCleary*. Director Harris expressed the appreciation for legislative engagement however was not sure it had been or will be successful. She noted that she is concerned about the need to meet the bare-bone needs of our schools and committing to actual community engagement. Director Burke noted that there seems to be a difference in what he reads and hears, and would like it accurately captured in the narrative. He concurred that engagement and outreach need to occur earlier. Director Peters indicated the importance of acknowledging the *McCleary* issues as well as look at what the District is working with now. She noted the focus seems to only be on the legislative part and to put the budget under a microscope, utilize independent audits and follow up assessments. She suggested changing the June date to May, as June is too close to the deadline. Mr. Nielsen noted the audit would need to be done in December in order for the information to be available to meet the deadlines. Director Patu asked for clarification on the process for getting an independent audit. Mr. Nielsen noted that the key question is what the purpose of the audit is and that it is important for the auditor to understand the Washington state funding model. He noted that an audit would look at the use of resources and how it compares to other districts. Erinn Bennett noted that there will need to be a review of the feedback as well, which increases the length of time for the audit. Director Harris asked for a continuum of costs for an audit, in both time and money.

Goal 5: Carri Campbell noted that this goal's focus was on engagement and collaboration. She noted the goal is to create a predictable and standard procedure with both an internal and external focus on community engagement. She noted that 3 of the 4 elements are roll over goals. She discussed the elements of the goal and the intended method of reaching a proficient rating in these elements. Clover Codd noted that

increasing the capacity of individuals to avoid conflict and collaboratively solve problems is a focus. She noted part of this focus is a training component, tier-two support in human resources, in-house leaders to get trained in how to facilitate difficult conversation, and engaging with partners. Ms. Campbell noted the focus on customer service is around developing standards and consistency. Director Blanford expressed his concerns around community engagement and that the District seems to be in engaging with the community a lot, however it might be providing disproportionate feedback. He suggested that the District utilize a bigger net and engage families that we may not have engaged in the past. Ms. Campbell noted that there were two deliverables notes and could work to make it more explicit to have more balanced and diverse groups at the table. Dir. Burke asked if there was currently any baseline data relating to conflict resolution or problem solving. Dr. Codd noted that the District does have some data from schools but not from the central office. She will further work with Eric Anderson to make sure the District can get a better baseline.

Erinn Bennett thanked the Directors for the feedback.

Director Patu announced at 7:24 pm that the Board was immediately recessing the special meeting into executive session to evaluate the performance of a public employee, and the session was scheduled for approximately 30 minutes, with an anticipated end time of 8:00 pm.

Executive Session: Evaluate the performance of a public employee

- Director Patu called the executive session to order at 7:25 pm.
- Directors Blanford, Burke, Geary, Harris, Patu, and Pinkham were present. Director Peters joined by phone.
- Staff present was Superintendent Larry Nyland, General Counsel Noel Treat.

At 8:00 pm, Director Patu announced that the executive session to evaluate the performance of a public employee was now expected to go an additional 15 minutes, with an anticipated end time of 8:15 pm.

At 8:15 pm, Director Patu recessed the Board out of executive session.

The Special Meeting reconvened at 8:15 pm and there being no further business to come before the Board, Director Patu adjourned the special meeting at 8:15 pm.