

Board Special Meeting



2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98134

Board Special Meeting: Budget and Student Assignment Transition Plan
Wednesday, January 11, 2017, 4:30-7:00pm
Auditorium, John Stanford Center

Minutes

1. Call to Order:

This meeting was called to order at 4:30pm. Directors Peters, Harris, Pinkham, Geary, Burke, and Blandford were present. Director Patu arrived at 5:03pm.

2. Work Session: Budget:

This session was staffed by Superintendent Larry Nyland; Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen and Associate Superintendent of Business and Finance JoLynn Berge.

Director Peters explained due to the nature of this meeting we have chosen to live broadcast the meeting tonight.

Superintendent Nyland spoke about working with the legislature saying this is a manufactured crisis, and it is the state's responsibility to fix the levy cliff and provide for compensation. He explained that we will do a press conference tomorrow, drawing attention to the levy cliff. He spoke about the communication internally that reiterates the legislature's responsibility but also with a nuance in terms of what do these cuts look like, what's the timing, and the further we get into the discussions the more details people will want to have. Dr. Nyland spoke about how Deputy Superintendent Stephen Nielsen and Assistant Superintendent JoLynn Berge met with our delegation this morning.

Representative for the 36th District Noel Frame, Representative for the 43rd District Nicole Marci dialed into the meeting. Representative Frame explained both of them are very passionate about fully funding our Public Schools and are committed to doing that this year. Representative Frame stated that this morning the Seattle Delegation met with Superintendent Nyland, members of his senior team, the school District's contractors and Director Geary. She spoke about the importance of the Legislature addressing the issue of the Levy Cliff. She explained they are both supporters and co-sponsors of the bill, and they hope it will move out of the House very quickly. This is a top priority for us to ensure no harm is done to school districts all across the State.

Director Blanford asked for specificity or prioritization of Senate members the community should call. Representative Marci explained this would include members of the Senate Early Learning and K-12 Education Committee, the Chair is Hans Zeiger from the 25th, and Republican members are Joe Fain from the 47th, Rivers from 18th and Judy Warnock. Director Peters thanked the Representatives for their time and support.

Ms. Berge summarized the agenda for the work session. She explained the Weighted Staffing Standard (WSS), use of the equity lens, programs and the recommendation for solving the remaining \$11.1M. Ms. Berge explained that in previous budget work sessions concurrence was reached on using 50% of our economic reserve or our rainy day fund. We are planning on having a fund balance under our worst case scenario budget of about 1.6% at the end of FY17-18. Ms. Berge spoke about how the list was longer but there were some items that Board Members did not have a comfort level with and those items have been removed. After reviewing the minutes she believe they had reached consensus on December 3rd regarding audit recovery funds, reducing the cost of our 24 credit implementation of the new state requirement, efficiencies of \$4M for central office, eliminating the district contingency reserve, the Fall enrollment reserves and the funding to reduce school splits.

Director Blanford asked how we compared to other Districts our size are we efficient or inefficient. Ms. Berge spoke about comparison data available and it can be found in packets from the September 10th Board retreat.

Director Peters asked about the list that includes the 24 credit enhancements and any savings there. Dr. Nyland explained \$7M in the recommendation that came forward from the task force from last year. It became apparent in the last several months that we are not able to move to a change in the schedule this coming year. For those students that don't earn their credits during the next school year we need a plan to help them mitigate that they aren't irreparably behind in terms of being able to graduate on time.

Ms. Berge spoke about the preliminary work that began in early September where they discussed use of Levy.

Principal at Highland Park Elementary School Chris Cronas spoke about how the Principal's Association participated looking at the massive deficit and how are we going to solve the problem. He spoke about the concern of losing teachers but based on the way the contracts written we could push that back and reduce the overall number, that also had an impact on the number of assistant principals that would be needed.

Ms. Berge spoke about the WSS committee and the roll back of K3 class sizes. She explained non-high poverty schools would roll back to 26/1, which is our contract limit. The high poverty schools would still have some staffing enhancements and that would be kindergarten at 22, first grade at 23, second grade at 24 the free and reduced lunch discretionary dollars we had originally proposed a million dollars. Based on the reasons given by Mr. Cronas they asked us to reconsider, the reason was compelling and now that number is zero.

Directors asked did the strategies that we put together with the discretionary funds work. Ms. Berge explained it does depend on the school.

Ms. Berge discussed eliminating Counselors and while there are a lot of very compelling reasons to ensure that counselors do remain in our schools, we are still stuck with a \$74M dollar deficit that we are trying to figure out.

Ms. Berge spoke about equity tier calculation methodology and how the WSS committee talked about it. The research department looked at 12 different factors about African American males, Students of color, and poverty and achievement for those kids.

Director Harris asked if we will add columns with LAP, Title I or foundation dollars. Ms. Berge explained the need to be able to defend our methodology, but we also want to be as complete as possible we are working with our WSS committee and internally as a leadership team on additional considerations. Director Pinkham asked if we might challenge it legally, considering historically underrepresented minorities as one of the criteria. Ms. Berge stated she did not believe so, she explained that we have been using something similar when we send out mitigations for this year.

Director Blanford asked why we not expecting the Special Education costs to increase next year. Ms. Berge explained we are trying to work towards efficiencies. Chief of Student Support Services Wyeth Jesse and Ms. Berge are looking at the program for these efficiencies.

Director Peters asked why athletics is on this list. Ms. Berge explained athletics is limited, there was in fact some debate yesterday at the Principals Leadership Day she think there are some different schools of thought.

Director Patu stated she believes athletics is very important for of kids of color, it motivates them to do well in school and that has been a known fact she thinks that we only have a million dollars in athletics and she thinks that it's an area where we should keep it where it is. She would hate to see cut that program because it is important to our kids.

Director Peters asked why we not really looking at the capital budget. Ms. Berge explained capital would not impacted by these operating cuts. We have a general fund issue for our operating there is not the same budget issue in Capital that there is on the operating side. Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Michael Tolley explained we have had a task force working on a number of questions as it relates to international schools and dual language.

Ms. Berge spoke about major cuts this far. We are reducing schools through the WSS by 4%, central office by 5.3% we're using half of our economic stabilization fund. We are still \$11.1M short. Other reductions that we could use to solve the remaining deficit: we could suspend all curriculum adoption through 2017-18, that is worth \$11.5M. This is comprised of three components, the \$5M that we have set aside each year for curriculum adoption, the \$4.5mdollars that we have not spent yet in 2016-17 for the K-5 English Language Arts (ELA) adoption, as well as the \$2M that was ear marked for middle school math. Another option is to extend the planning year for Cedar Park. If we extend that through 2017-18 it would save \$1.5M.

Director Blanford asked if summer school at \$.25 that seems like a reduction or is that the elimination of summer school next. Ms. Berge confirmed it was a reduction. Dr. Nyland spoke about programs that have been launched and we will now not fund them. He explained he has been speaking about our budgets being unsustainable for years because the state is not paying for compensation. That's \$100M dollars that we could quibble whether the state owes us \$90M or whether they owe us \$100M. He explained that the legislature owe us \$100M but that means every year in order to meet that obligation to pay our teachers fairly we have to tighten every portion of our budget.

Director Peters expressed her disappointment in lack of funding for K-5 language arts and middle school math. Director Burke also expressed concern on the lack of funding for programs and curriculum adoption. Director Harris asked for addition clarification on Cedar Park after the budget cuts. Dedy Fauntleroy, Planning Principal for Cedar Park explained we are currently stopped because we don't want to engage communities without full information and we don't want to confuse families when we're having discussions about yes it might happen and no it might not happen. We've had a community meeting and we've had a couple scheduled in partnership with Seattle Housing Authority that they have asked to postpone until we have more information that is definitive for their community.

Dr. Nyland spoke about the effort that is made to balance the budget every year we say we are going to be firm this year and we are going to spend less money on mitigation and then our option schools and our dual language schools come and we finally reluctantly say oh you're right, so no there's no grand plan to do away with them. He stated the budget is getting tighter and tighter and tighter.

Director Burke expressed concern about no Directors coming forward with amended language to add a postponement in and so his preference would be that we stay the course until otherwise corrected, he is hoping that we can come up with some sort of guidance for the community of Cedar Park. Director Pinkham agreed with Director Burke. Director Blanford asked if there are a whole list of other cuts that are smaller but that would be a long list in order for us to get to \$11M and in the absence of some long list of smaller items that we could tick off one by one there is no way that we can get to \$11M.

Mr. Nielsen spoke about it being possible to find \$11.5M in other places that is absolutely true but back to the key point it's going to be in staff, it will be in cuts to program services which would be a long list of things and this is what he knows having gone through this before and others in the room as well.

Director Geary spoke about her concern in the uncertainty in the long-term plan. Director Harris asked about cuts with a prioritization of a restoration plan. Mr. Nielsen spoke about the need to get a restoration plan in place. Ms. Berge spoke about the need to come to a consensus tonight in order to meet the appropriate timelines. Director Burke spoke about being comfortable moving forward with the WSS recommendation. Director Harris was also comfortable with WSS. Director Geary asked what the contractual obligations are if we do not come to a consensus. Ms. Codd explained we would be violation of our contract. Director Peters asked for the methodology behind these suggested cuts.

Mr. Nielsen explained we have to meet our legal requirements to operate a school district we do not want to make cuts that inhibit that requirement. We also have to meet our collective bargaining agreements.

Ms. Berge stated the Directors have spoken about K5 ELA adoption and the \$2M for middle school math that still leaves the \$5M for next year. Director Burke stated she is willing to let the \$5M for next year go if we can flip our procedure around such that we can actually start a process without committed funding recognizing that it is typically an 18 to 24 month process. It should not have to have allocated funding in place to be able to initiate an adoption recognizing the actual expense will be subsequent budget.

Director Pinkham spoke about additional funds needed for curriculum adoption, that is more money that we just will not spend, and saving money, we just will not spend it. Versus when doing the staff reduction we are saving money we are hiring as much staff as they had before. The other portion for is that right now would not support not opening Cedar Park. Director Blanford asked Mr. Cronas what the Principal core is suggesting as the most important. Mr. Cronas explained it was equity. Director Geary stated she is comfortable with the \$5M of set aside and she is comfortable including the math, what money spent on the middle school math adoption whatever is left on that for now. Director Harris stated she is uncomfortable with determining how we do these spends at this table with the clock running she would much prefer to see a menu of alternatives with real back up. Director Patu explained she would like everyone to really look at what happens when taking away from the schools most in need.

Directors agreed to the WSS. The additional \$11.1M was not fully agreed on.

Ms. Berge explained she will add it to our next steps to be discussed at the next work session.

This meeting recessed at 6:39pm and reconvened 6:52pm.

3. Student Assignment Transition Plan for 2017-18: - (Ops, Nov. 17, for consideration)
Approval of this item would approve the Student Assignment Plan, dated November 8, 2016.

This session was staffed by Superintendent Larry Nyland, Associate Superintendent of Capital, Facilities & Enrollment Flip Herndon, and Director of Enrollment & Planning Services Ashley Davies, and Associate Superintendent of Business and Finance JoLynn Berge.

Director Harris moved to approve the motion. Director Pinkham seconded.

Directors and staff discussed the motion and the changes to the transition plan. Directors discussed language throughout the plan, the financial implications, and discussed community engagement and feedback.

Director Peters moved to delete the word “greater” from section III.A paragraph 3 under the Special Education Services section on page 15 of the Board Action Report packet (page 7 of the plan). Director Harris seconded. Directors noted the community engagement and feedback regarding these changes.

This motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Davies noted the changes to this item between introduction and action. Dr. Nyland noted the budget conversation and asked staff to present on the costs associated with the amendments. Dr. Herndon noted the fiscal costs attachment to the Action Report that outlined each of the amendments and their associated costs to the district.

- **Amendment 1 to the Student Assignment Plan for 2017-18: Allow Grandfathering with Transportation for All Rising 8th Graders** - Approval of this item would permit and implement grandfathering with transportation at comprehensive middle schools for all rising 8th graders in the 2017-18 school year who live within any area that is changing from one middle school to another for the

17-18 school year due to the opening of the Eagle Staff and Meany Middle Schools.
(Director Peters)

Director Peters provided an overview of the amendment. Directors and staff discussed the costs associated with this amendment. Staff discussed the open enrollment process and the effect it has on assignment.

Director Peters moved to approve this amendment. Director Burke seconded the motion.

Directors discussed enrollment and the unpredictability of the student population. They discussed how many students were affected by this amendment. Directors noted the community's feedback. They discussed the difference between equal and equitable. Directors noted their positions on this amendment. Director Pinkham noted that he would be abstaining from the vote.

This motion did not pass by a 2-4-1 vote. (Directors Patu & Peters voted yes; Directors Blanford, Burke, Geary, & Harris voted no; Director Pinkham abstained.)

- **Amendment 2 to the Student Assignment Plan for 2017-18: Adjust Elementary Feeder School Patterns to Move Greenwood Elementary and Broadview Thompson K-8 into the Whitman Middle School Service Area** - Approval of this item would designate Greenwood elementary and Broadview Thompson K-8 as feeder schools for Whitman Middle School. (Directors Burke and Pinkham)

Director Burke motioned to approve this amendment. Director Harris seconded the motion.

Director Burke provided an overview of this amendment and noted his position on bringing it forward. He provided feedback from discussion at his community meetings. Directors and staff discussed enrollment projections, portables, the positive and negative effects of this amendment, and the number of students influenced. Directors stated their positions on this amendment. Staff discussed future capital projects that could influence this amendment. Director Pinkham noted he would be abstaining from this vote.

This motion did not pass by a 1-5-1 vote. (Director Burke voted yes; Directors Blanford, Geary, Harris, Patu, and Peters voted no; Director Pinkham abstained.)

- **Amendment 5 to the Student Assignment Transition Plan for 2017-18: Facility Space for Licton Springs K-8** – Approval of this Item would signal the School Board's intent to allocate necessary classroom space for Licton Springs K-8 to grow its program and then reassess space prioritization no sooner than two years from now. (Directors Burke and Pinkham)

Director Pinkham discussed possible changes to the language in this motion.

Director Burke motioned to approve this amendment as currently written. Director Pinkham seconded the motion.

Directors discussed the concerns raised by the community and providing a permanent space for Licton Springs K-8. Directors and staff discussed the fiscal impact, building capacity and growth of the program.

Director Pinkham moved to amend this amendment by adding the following language at the end of the motion: "A minimum of 14 full size classrooms plus 2 resource rooms shall be allocated for the exclusive and full time use of Licton Springs in the school year 2017-18. This will enable it to meet current needs and ensure compliance with IDEA ADA requirements in relation to the 3 existing special education programs." Director Patu seconded the motion.

Directors discussed the concerns around setting aside space and expectations that future unknown decisions could affect. Directors and staff discussed the boundaries and impacts on Middle School and High School populations. They discussed the effects of the amendment on transportation and the budget. They noted how many students would be impacted by these boundary changes

The motion to amend amendment 5 did not pass by a 3-4-0 vote. (Directors Geary, Patu, and Pinkham voted yes; Directors Blanford, Burke, Harris, and Peters voted no.)

The motion to approve amendment 5 passed by a 6-1-0 vote. (Directors Burke, Geary, Harris, Patu, Pinkham, and Peters voted yes; Director Blanford voted no.)

Director Burke raised a question about middle school feeder patterns for students in the Olympic View Elementary attendance area.

- **Amendment 6 to the Student Assignment Transition Plan for 2017-18:** (Director Burke)

Director Burke brought forward a motion for an amendment 6 to the plan for students in Area 92 to be assigned to Jane Addams Middle School and students in Area 91 to be assigned to Eckstein Middle School in the 2017-18 Student Assignment Transition Plan. Director Patu seconded the motion.

Director Burke provided an overview of the amendment. Directors discussed lack of information on the amendment as well as lack of community engagement.

This motion did not pass by a 1-6-0 vote (Director Burke voted yes; Directors Blanford, Geary, Harris, Patu, Pinkham, and Peters voted no.)

The motion to pass the Student Assignment Transition Plan for 2017-18 as amended passed by a 6-1-0 vote. (Directors Blanford, Burke, Harris, Patu, Pinkham, and Peters voted yes; Director Geary voted no.)

This meeting adjourned at 9:35pm.