

BOARD SPECIAL MEETING OPERATIONS COMMITTEE



2445 – 3rd Avenue South, Seattle WA 98124

January 21, 2016
Stanford Center, Board Conference Room

Approved Minutes

Director Stephan Blanford called the meeting to order at 4:30pm. Director Jill Geary was in attendance; Director Scott Pinkham was not at the meeting. Associate Superintendent Flip Herndon, Assistant Superintendent for Operations Pegi McEvoy, and Capital Projects Director Richard Best staffed the meeting.

The agenda and minutes of the December 17th meeting were approved.

Monthly capital financial report: Melissa Coan reviewed the October monthly capital report with the directors. She noted that revenues were up due to the receipt of October tax collections. Responding to questions, she said that:

- Technically, the district could round fund reports to millions, but she prefers to keep it rounded to hundreds of thousands of dollars as it is more transparent.
- Directors should keep an eye on ending fund balances, program budget columns, and life to date information.

Richard Best also noted that while Ms. Coan works closely with the Capital Projects staff and is located in the Capital Projects area, she actually reports to the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance so that her relationship with Capital staff is arm's length and independent from Capital operations.

BTA III: Columbia School modernization Phase I, Final acceptance of contract with Edifice

Construction Co.: Richard Best pointed out the lateness of this final acceptance (and others coming forward) and said that the district is working on changing provisions in future contracts to tie the start of the warranty period to the board final acceptance. This should incentivize contractors to complete work and streamline internal work; Flip Herndon added that this will be a great accountability measure as well. Committee members asked for project checklists to be included for board introduction.

In response to questions, Richard Best said that from his years of experience, he uses 5% as typical for change orders on a new construction project, 10% on standard modernizations, and 15% for historic renovations. The committee moved this item forward to the full board with a recommendation for approval.

BTA III: Columbia School modernization, Phase II, Final acceptance of contract with Regency

NW Construction, Inc.: Richard Best noted that change orders were below 10% on this infrastructure and technology project. The committee moved this item forward to the full board with a recommendation for approval.

BEX IV: Cascadia Elementary School-Robert Eagle Staff Middle School, Approval of change

order #3: The committee moved this item forward to the full board with a recommendation for approval. Due to only having one board meeting in February, they also recommended that this item be introduced and acted on at the same board meeting.

Bell times implementation update: Pegi McEvoy reported that surveys are being conducted among the 13 Tier 3 school communities to determine if they want to move to an earlier tier in the spring if transportation routing will be able to accommodate them on a cost neutral basis. Staff will begin in February to work with community-based organizations and joint use agreement mitigation strategies. Flip Herndon noted that the conversation regarding bell times and capacity and the interaction with the joint use agreement is not just about secondary schools; in elementary schools it is also cafeterias, libraries, and spaces for childcare providers. Storage becomes a huge issue. Pegi McEvoy also said that schools are beginning to work through master scheduling complexities and are working with central office staff on breakfast and lunch schedules with the adjusted arrival-departure schedules.

Policy 3208, update on sexual harassment and Title IX work: Kelli Schmidt, the district's new student civil rights compliance officer in the new Office of Civil Rights, described how this work is being reorganized in the district into this new department. She reviewed the recommendations of Seattle Public Schools' Task Force for Prevention of and Response to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault. The task force started in November 2014 and submitted their final report December 2015. She noted that networking with the related community agencies helped build a task force made up of excellent representatives of subject matter experts, district staff, and parents and students in our community. They put in an inordinate amount of time and energy to this work.

The task force was formed in response to the community being upset over incidents that had transpired and feelings that there was a systemic failure in the district's response and that there were no systems in place to adequately respond to complaints. Some of the task force findings and recommendations included:

- That a case management system needs to be put in place, tracking and making sure the district is timely in responses.
- Good policies and procedures need to be in place, to include definitions of sexual harassment and assault. Administrator procedures for step-by-step responses should be developed; notices on the procedures and additional training should be provided.
- Build an infrastructure for knowledge and awareness and create a culture and climate where people know where to go. Counselors need to get more support to be able to respond to complaints.
- Create a web presence where people looking from the outside can get to.

She noted that district staff is working on information that can be translated in culturally sensitive ways to be sent home to all families for their information. Three questions are also being added to the student climate surveys. Committee members asked that the board be made aware of any materials going home ahead of time so they can be sensitive to the community.

Committee members were interested in what recommendations would be considered cutting edge and set Seattle ahead of the field. The translated work, creating a culture of equity and gender equity, and integrating the conversation into Curriculum and Instruction and health education were areas identified.

In response to questions, Ms. Schmidt talked about her prior work with the U.S. Department of Education and the process she went through as she applied for this position in the district, including getting herself off all SPS cases before she applied, reviewing her work with both the General Counsel's office and the internal auditor to ensure that there was no real or perceived conflict of interest. Directors noted it is not uncommon at all for people in an organization to be walled off from particular issues if there was a conflict of interest. Ms. Schmidt stated that it was important for the district to be transparent to build trust with the community and committed to her office responding quickly and being clear and fair and transparent.

In the conversation about which board committee should routinely get these reports, Director Blanford suggested that the question go to the executive committee but either the Operations Committee or the Curriculum & Instruction Policy Committee could provide board oversight of the work. He noted these are serious issues that the board should track on a regular basis.

Operations Committee annual work plan: Director Blanford asked that committee members and staff review the work plan and provide feedback over the next month, using the plan so that issues do not get raised out of sequence, providing a mechanism for predictability to the work for both board members and staff. Director Geary noted that she is interested in where the decisions are made that resulted in the uproar about moving teachers around in the fall and how to minimize that kind of disruption. Director Blanford also asked that his colleagues review materials ahead of time and note questions to help move through agendas.

BEX/BTA 101: This item was tabled, as Director Pinkham was not in attendance. After some discussion, it was agreed that this session could better be done in the 2:2 format with the other new board members.

The meeting adjourned at 6:05pm.