

**School District No. 1J, Multnomah County, Oregon
Board Retreat of June 28 and 29, 2017**

INFORMAL MINUTES

A Retreat of the Board of Directors came to order at 8:36am at the call of Vice-Chair Amy Kohnstamm, Chair Tom Koehler in the Library at Concordia University, 2811 NE Holman Street, Portland, Oregon, 97211.

There were present:

Board of Directors:

Tom Koehler, Chair - *absent*
Amy Kohnstamm, Vice-Chair
Paul Anthony
Steve Buel – *absent June 28th*
Julie Esparza Brown
Pam Knowles - *absent*
Mike Rosen

Staff:

Sascha Perrins, Interim Chief of Staff
Rosanne Powell, Board Office Manager

Panasonic Foundation (Facilitator):

George Perry
Barbara Anderson

Board Elect:

Julia Brim-Edwards
Scott Bailey
Rita Moore
Moses Tran, Student Representative

JUNE 28, 2017

Welcome; Ice Breaker/Team Building Activities

George Perry stated that the purpose of the Retreat was an opportunity for Board Members to reach a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities and to consider policies and practices that build their capacity to exercise governance and leadership and instill trust and confidence in Portland Public Schools.

The Board participated in an Ice Breaker exercise in which they shared their connection with each other.

Discussion of Values and Aspirations for PPS

Board Members were asked what values they have and want to remain true in regards to public education. Responses included: students always as the center focus; every student deserves the opportunity to achieve their potential with the supports they need; student focused, not settling for ok, having high standards; empowerment around students, engage students; community has a strong influence on student education; community building; education needs to be funded as if we value it; free universal public education; students are people first; equity; empowering parents; need to break down borders and walls; accessibility.

Board Members were asked what values they want to remain true to regarding Board work. Responses included: present and participatory, and at the same time being respectful; sensitive to air time; acknowledge staff work; respectfully challenge one another; be prepared; be critical thinkers; keep a focus on kids; trust and responsiveness; communication with one another; support one another; value each other's contributions; transparency; accessible; share information; integrity and responsibility; be

prepared; earn respect; here to serve; accountable; build trust; clear communication with the public; ethics; service oriented.

At 10:30am, the Board took a ten minute break.

Discussion of Aspirations for the Board

Board Members were asked how they wanted to be known as a Board. Responses included: why have updating of policies not occurred as that is the foundation of the Board's work; we are the model of civil discourse and need communication protocols and common consensus; we need a shared understanding of what Board leadership means and need to evaluate if the Board has been following policy; should be flexible with policies as sometimes a policy will not address something or it is a very old policy. Ms. Anderson reviewed the comments Board members had made during their individual phone conversations with her, and distributed a document that summarized the trends from Board interviews. Mr. Perry reviewed Carver's Policy Governance Model Principles.

At 12:15pm, the Board took a 35 minute break for lunch.

Board members discussed the governance model. Mention was made of Board training in Courageous Conversations and the need of a Board Secretary and Auditor. The Board Secretary would be the key point for Board Policy. Ms. Brim-Edwards stated that the Board needs to come to an agreement of how we air our disagreements with the majority vote, and the Board should consider the messaging after a decision is made to the community. Board Members discussed the actions that occur after they make a decision, and in the future, they would like to know the process and timeline of implementation (on-going monitoring reports).

Introduction to Sample Board Policies and Protocols

Attorney Randy Geller provided an overview of sample board policies and protocols, reviewing and analyzing draft policies, and policy agreements. Mr. Geller stated that PPS governance policies were not up to date and that Interim Superintendent McKean had asked his law firm to look at the Board governance policies. Mr. Geller commented that he was surprised by how many meetings the Board has. Mr. Geller had provided his written recommendations to Board members on changing their governance policies. Ms. Brim-Edwards questioned why the Board received his documents in a confidential envelope when they should have been made public. Mr. Geller stated that his revised policies should be adopted by the Board.

At 3:00pm, the Board took a five minute break.

Mr. Perry asked the Board for their reflection on Day 1 of the Retreat. Responses included: a lot of work needs to be done on policies; setting an agreement on Board Protocols; policy work to be done; different perspectives and on-going collaboration between the new Board; Board roles and obligations; and, the elephant in the room that has not been discussed.

Department Presentations

Staff members provided an overview of their department(s):

- Laura Parker, Interim Chief Information Officer – Information Technology
- Jerry Vincent, Chief Operating Officer - Nutrition Services, Office of School Modernization, Security Services, Facilities, Transportation, Enrollment and Transfer, and Mailroom
- Ryan Dutcher, Interim Chief Financial Officer – Accounting, Payroll, Budget, Purchasing and Contracting, and Risk Management

- Sharon Reese, Interim Chief Human Resources Officer, and Lisa Gardner, Interim Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer – Human Resources
- Anna Richer-Taylor, Interim Chief of Communications – Community Involvement and Public Affairs

The Board adjourned at 5:45pm on June 28, 2017.

JUNE 29, 2017

Vice-Chair Amy Kohnstamm convened Day 2 of the Retreat at 10:53am.

The Board participated in an Ice Breaker exercise in which they shared the career they would have chosen knowing what they know now.

Coming Together as a Board

Board Members were asked what their concerns of the Board were. Responses included: not just one problem with the Board, there were several; senior staff of color leaving saying they did so over the treatment of them by the Board; need to acknowledge the issue of white privilege on the Board; the way we talk about each other and the way we talk about employees; lack of communication to the community; need to be present, put electronic devices away during meetings; the tone of communication in a public meeting; no strategic vision, everything is disconnected; Board is reactive due to lack of information; need to follow our own processes and policies and hold each other accountable; Board is fractured with a lot of isolation; need to honor those who are doing the work; administration has not taken care of problems so the community has to contact Board members; lack of collaborative agenda setting.

Board Members were asked what they would like to see going forward. Responses included: would like to know what PAPSA may say to them and how we will respond as a Board; Board members should not provide confidential information to the media or others; need to follow the law carefully, stay on the issues, and no political agendas; need to be a model to children (respectful and professional language that pertains to Board business); we are a “we”, the District; need to function within our lanes; Board Members may disagree; we are all committed to improve and reform the District; it is our responsibility to lead improvement efforts through policy, budget, and supervision of the Superintendent in creating systems of support; we will give staff the respect and consideration due to professional employees; we will engage in conversation with PAPSA and staff to clarify what respect and consideration looks like and invite PAPSA and others to participate; we recognize past system failures and will move forward to create strategic direction; we will find an educational leader and system designer who will lead the District and provide supports for staff to do their jobs.

Director Rosen suggested that a Committee of the Board be formed to meet with PAPSA representatives and that the Committee drafts a letter from the Board to PAPSA. It was determined that the Committee would include Directors Rosen and Anthony along with Ms. Brim-Edwards.

At 1:08pm, the Board took a 45 minute break for lunch.

Organizing Our Work

Mr. Perry referred to the Metro Nashville Board Communications Protocols and asked Board Members to work on their own protocols for 45 minutes.

Next Steps

Mr. Perry indicated that at the next Board Retreat, the Board would begin work on their Strategic Plan.

Department Presentations

Staff members provided an overview of their department:

- Van Truong, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning – Office of Teaching and Learning
- Antonio Lopez, Assistant Superintendent of School Performance – Office of School Performance
- Stephanie Harper, Senior Legal Counsel – General Counsel Office
- Jeanine Fukuda, Senior Director – Office of Equity and Partnerships

ADJOURN

Vice-Chair Kohnstamm adjourned the Retreat at 6:18pm on June 29, 2017.

Submitted by:

Caren Huson-Quiniones, Board Clerk
PPS Board of Education