



Poudre School District Board of Education

2407 Laporte Avenue, Fort Collins, CO 80521 • 970-490-3607

Meeting Minutes

Minutes from Board of Education Business Meeting
January 9, 2018

DINNER SESSION – 5:30 PM

PRESENT: President Christophe Febvre, Vice President Susan Gutowsky; Directors Nate Donovan, Kristen Draper, Cathy Kipp, Rob Petterson, and Carolyn Reed; Superintendent Sandra Smyser, Assistant Superintendents Jinger Haberer, Todd Lambert, and Scott Nielsen; Executive Directors Danielle Clark, Pete Hall, Dave Montoya, Dustin Reintsma, and Victoria Thompson

ABSENT: Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb

1.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION

Director Petterson moved that the Board go into executive session as authorized under C.R.S. §24-6-402(4)(f) to discuss personnel matters concerning District administrator conduct and supervisory authority. Individuals invited to join the Board and Superintendent in executive session are Executive Directors Dave Montoya and Vicki Thompson, and Assistant Board Secretary Valerie Stoddard.

Director Donovan seconded the motion.

The voting was as follows:

Those voting AYE: Directors Donovan, Draper, Febvre, Gutowsky, Kipp, Petterson and Reed

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed 7-0

The executive session began at 5:32 p.m.

The executive session ended at 6:03 p.m.

2.0 AGENDA PLANNING:

The Board discussed adding Medicaid to the agenda and agreed to revisit at a future dinner session for clarity.

Director Petterson mentioned holding an executive session regarding the Timnath negotiations. Executive directors Montoya and Hall are scheduled to meet with them, and will report results at a future meeting.

The next Board lunch will be January 19, 2018.

Director Petterson indicated concern that the February 27, 2018 meeting agenda is too full because the DE 1.0 monitoring report will take a lot of time. This will be addressed during agenda setting.

Director Kipp would like to know how long items will take before going into meetings. This will be addressed during agenda setting.

Director Petterson mentioned a visit to Cherry Creek regarding innovation. Board members from Cherry Creek indicated at the CASB conference that some PSD Board members could visit to see what they are doing related to innovative schools. This has not yet been scheduled.

2.0 DISTRICT INFORMATION

Superintendent Smyser informed the Board that an extraordinary number of PSD schools are being honored with many awards during the recognitions portion of the regular business meeting.

3.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no committee reports discussed.

The dinner session ended at 6:24 PM

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING (BOARDROOM) – 6:30 PM

PRESENT: President Christophe Febvre, Vice President Susan Gutowsky; Directors Nate Donovan, Kristen Draper, Cathy Kipp, Rob Petterson and Carolyn Reed; Superintendent Sandra Smyser, Assistant Superintendents Jinger Haberer, Todd Lambert, and Scott Nielson; Executive Directors Danielle Clark, Pete Hall, Dave Montoya, Dustin Reintsma, and Victoria Thompson

ABSENT: Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

President Febvre called the regular business meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Febvre led the Board of Education and audience members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Director Donovan moved to remove action item 7.1, Monitoring-Policy Review of EL 2.0, from the agenda to be placed on a future agenda.

Director Reed seconded the motion.

Voting was as follows:

Those voting AYE: Directors Donovan, Draper, Febvre, Gutowsky, Kipp, Petterson and Reed

Those voting NO: None

Motion passed 7-0

4.0 RECOGNITIONS AND REPORTS

4.1 Colorado Department of Education School Awards

Superintendent Smyser announced that Poudre School District (PSD) has earned the highest number of awards ever received at once. More than 20 PSD schools were recognized for academic achievement, growth, and performance.

Executive Director Clark introduced Assistant Superintendent Nielson, who recognized the schools and Principals as recipients of the prestigious Governor's Distinguished Improvement Awards: Bacon Elementary, Harris Bilingual School, Livermore Elementary, McGraw Elementary, O'Dea Elementary, Riffenburgh Elementary, Shepardson Elementary, Traut Core Knowledge Elementary, Werner Elementary, Zach Elementary, and Mountain Sage Community School.

Assistant Superintendent Lambert spoke to the schools who won the John Irwin Schools of Excellence Award for school year 2017-2018, and were recognized for outstanding academic achievement in language arts, math and science. Schools recognized were Bennett Elementary, Bethke Elementary, Dunn Elementary, Livermore Elementary, Kruse Elementary, McGraw Elementary, Red Feather Lakes Elementary, Traut Core Knowledge Elementary, Werner Elementary, Zach Elementary, Kinard Middle School, Fossil Ridge High School, Liberty Common Charter School, and Fort Collins Montessori school.

Assistant Superintendent Lambert presented the Colorado Center of Excellence Award to Putnam Elementary. This is a prestigious award and one very few schools have the honor of receiving. To qualify for this award, schools must have a minimum of 75% of its student population considered “at risk”. Schools must also demonstrate sustained growth as measured by the Colorado growth model.

Director Petterson addressed the award recipients on behalf of the Board of Education. The Board is proud of PSD schools and educators and appreciate their hard work.

4.2 Superintendent’s Report

Superintendent Smyser presented the report for this month, which included attendance at several committee meetings, new Board member orientation, visits to Beattie Elementary and Poudre High Schools, and attendance at Principal-level meetings, which occur twice a month and highlight collaborative work that will advance the ends of PSD. Additional activities this month include:

- Meeting with Thompson School District Superintendent, Stan Sheer, who is retiring this year
- Participating in a meeting with the PACE Board
- Discussion with leaders at the Poudre River Library district
- Brief attendance at the Cooper Home Winter Graduation ceremony
- Working with cabinet members examining the day-to-day function of new human resources system software
- Attended Connect First – a Bohemian Foundation project- that meets to convene support groups to establish goals for children in our community.
- Working with members of Cabinet on:
 - Data privacy-Website
 - Purchasing
 - Career cruising and PWR / gradebook

Around the district, schools are holding open houses and kindergarten registration has begun. School choice applications are being accepted.

4.3 Board Report

Director Petterson presented the Board report.

The Board has been busy attending various events and meetings this month, including subcommittee meetings, the Superintendent's performance feedback, community outreach, and meeting with legislators. The Board also conducted a visit at Kinard Middle School in addition to attending the monthly Board lunch and new Board member orientation. Other meetings and events attended by the Board are as follows:

- Meeting with constituents
- Taking part in the recent PFLAG meeting
- Attended the Chalkbeat Legislative Preview
- Focusing on citizens initiatives and increasing education funding in the fall by vote
- Attendance at the Cooper Home send-off
- Participation in the District Accountability Committee meeting
- Meeting with the District Advisory Board
- Attendance at the Chalkbeat legislative preview
- Discussion on child well-being with Bohemian Foundation
- Meeting with Fort Collins and Larimer County Leaders
- FCHS Holiday Gift Concert
- PHS Corus Holiday Concert
- Kinard Madrigals

Board members also invited members of the community to attend a "Brews with the Board" engagement event on Monday 1/22/18 at 5:30 p.m. at CB and Potts at Collindale. This gathering will provide an opportunity for the community to speak to the Board and discuss topics such as District late start.

5.0 COMMUNITY COMMENT

Melissa Schoenbaum wished to discuss the future of the PSD high school hockey team and suggested that PSD offer a second hockey team.

Jon Runge spoke about the PSD high school hockey team. He would like the District to add another varsity team.

6.0 CONSENT AGENDA

6.1 Personnel Action

6.2 Meeting Minutes for November 28, 2017, December 1, 2017, December 3, 2017, December 7, 2017, and December 12, 2017

6.3 Fort Collins Montessori School Readiness Assessment Waiver Request

Director Donovan moved to approve and adopt the recommended actions for the items on the consent agenda.

Director Reed seconded the motion.

Voting was as follows:

Those voting AYE: Directors Donovan, Draper, Febvre, Gutowsky, Kipp, Petterson and Reed

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed 7-0

7.0 ACTION ITEMS

7.1 Monitoring/Policy Review: EL 2.4, Financial Planning and Budgeting

Director Kipp moved that the Board determine that the Superintendent has reasonably interpreted Board of Education policy EL 2.4, Financial Planning and Budgeting, in her internal monitoring report dated January 9, 2018 and that the evidence supports the Superintendent's conclusion in stated in the internal monitoring report.

Director Petterson seconded the motion.

Board discussion included:

A multi-year financial plan report will be presented in late January 2018. The Board will have the opportunity to discuss priorities in the budget at that time.

Voting was as follows:

Those voting AYE: Directors Donovan, Draper, Febvre, Gutowsky, Kipp, Petterson and Reed

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: None
Motion passed 7-0

8.0 INFORMATIONAL REPORTS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

8.1 Late Start

Superintendent Smyser explained the late start concept that would give secondary school students a later start time. This would also include changes in bus routing. At the direction of the Board, staff conducted extensive research on this topic.

Assistant Superintendents Lambert and Nielsen and Executive Directors Clark and Hall presented findings regarding the late start concept.

Desired outcomes identified include:

- Increased attendance
- Decrease in disciplinary action
- Decrease in student-involved car accidents
- Increase in GPA
- Increase in state assessment scores, college admission test scores
- Increase student attention
- Decrease in falling asleep during instruction
- Increase in quality of student-family interaction

Considerations of student impact includes:

- Start and end times
- Athletics and extracurriculars
- After school jobs/responsibilities
- Community partnership impacts
- Schedules and childcare needs
- Concurrent enrollment
- Family and community partnerships
- Human resources
- Instructional staff and extracurricular staff support
- Operations

Community feedback will be critical when considering possibly moving back secondary start times.

Transportation considerations are crucial. This would include driver recruitment and retention, transportation routing, cost, and scheduling. A value survey is being sent to parents and staff of middle and high school students. Would like to receive good feedback and expect to receive the preliminary results by March 12. Results of the survey will be broken down in three to four scenarios. Meetings will take place to review survey information between May and July 2018. The workgroup will then develop a second survey with new scenarios in late August and into September 2018. Community engagement sessions/forums will take place around the same timeframe. Information compiled will be presented to the Board in November. If the Board decides to move forward with later start times, implementation would begin in 2019 or 2020.

Board discussion included:

Director Reed met with a Weld County School District Board member and discussed how they implemented later start time for their high school students. They moved quickly because they had been working closely with City of Greeley to provide city bus transportation for students. One reason it worked for Greeley is they staffed only 75% of the drivers needed, as their high school routes do not have many students using the school bus. PSD has many students already riding City buses. Ridership data for exact numbers is not available at this time. We have been working with the City of Fort Collins to increase ridership. PSD tries to route buses effectively so buses are full to avoid the situation Greeley had. Another challenge is recruiting and retaining drivers. PSD is down by 15 drivers at the time of this discussion.

Director Petterson asked if the decision would be one the Board will make or the Superintendent. There will be more discussion on this. Director Petterson encouraged a strong partnership between the Board and Superintendent. It will be important to have good information flow and the data to back it up. Out-of-the-box thinking, and creative ideas are welcome. Remain focused on what is best for kids.

Director Petterson indicated that despite the anecdotal information provided, the science-based evidence is what is driving his support of later start times. The slide showing the impacts is helpful and he is in support of staff vigorously investigating the issue. There are many issues to be worked out and only if there is some compelling reason, such as overwhelming community opposition, would he consider being against this change.

President Febvre addressed the process timeline provided by staff. The Board indicated agreement on the process as it was presented. Looking at this issue also as a cost-benefit analysis. There is the sense that it is a good idea. It is difficult to quantify this. Need more information and would like to see examples of benefits as well as costs. PSD has a new software program that can quickly provide routing scenarios, based on various parameters, which will help in providing detailed information.

Director Draper asked staff to start scenarios based on start times indicated in the research. Director Donovan talked to the increased cost for busing if middle schools and high schools started at the same time. Suggested scenarios should be based on the tiered busing system we currently use. Another issue to consider is the earliest and latest times students are riding the bus, not just when the school starts and ends.

President Febvre stated that there is a lot of research about secondary students starting school later, but not a lot of research regarding the impact on elementary students if they start school earlier.

Director Kipp asked if the survey would be going out to community members. The survey will be sent to, parents, high school students, and the community. If implemented, it should be what is best for kids and be as cost efficient as possible. This is the desired outcome. Mental and physical health for our students is important. Going to school later will help with this. I will reduce the number of accidents and sleeping in class as well. Do what is best, starting school for secondary students after 8:30 a.m. unless the community is against it. One school district tried a later start then ended up going back to what they did before. Want to avoid that.

Director Petterson would like to know what kind of questions will be asked in the value survey. The survey is being created. Parents will be asked about their schedules, extra curriculars, and may be asked to provide their preferences on start times for their students. How will community members with no involvement in this situation, no context, be able to provide meaningful information? The survey will be designed to aid in designing scenarios that will be presented to the community for input. May still receive biased feedback, even with context on why the district is considering a shift in start times. PSD staff, including teachers from elementary schools will also participate in the survey.

Staff contacted Littleton, Brighton and Cherry Creek for information on how they dealt with the impact of late starts. Staff did not get a good response but will continue to try.

Director Petterson thinks we should do this for high school and middle school and should do it sooner than later. Waiting until PSD opens new schools is not ideal. It should be cost-neutral considering upcoming budget issues. Do not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Open to scenarios.

Director Donovan supports the analysis.

Cherry Creek has their survey posted on their website, and data collected suggests the biggest concern for elementary schools has been the end time, not start time.

Board members thanked the presenters for the information and indicated confidence in staff as they continue to consider the prospect of later start times. Looking forward to receiving updates as the District moves through this issue.

Director Reed asked what the earliest time our students get on the bus. The earliest pick up time is at 6:04 a.m. for Poudre High School from Red Feather. The longest ride is 112 minutes. The latest drop off time is 5:00 p.m. back to Red Feather.

Many students arrive at school well before the school day begins. This is one more important piece, like sports, that should be considered. May need to consider that the mountain schools are outliers and should not direct the decision.

8.2 Legislative Discussion

The legislative session starts January 10 and Director Kipp will attend the legislative session at the State Capitol. Board members discussed issues that would likely come up at the session, such as education funding, PERA's financial difficulty with long-term outlook, and a bill that would eliminate of the high school Social Studies CMAS exam. The District is in support of this because PSD already has a Social Studies graduation requirement and it is not clear that we would get any meaningful data from it. Anticipate the opt-out rate would be high.

9.0 EXECUTIVE SESSION

9.1 Superintendent Evaluation

Director Gutowsky moved that the Board go into executive session as authorized under C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f) to discuss personnel matters related to the Superintendent's performance appraisal, annual evaluation and possible contract revisions. Individuals invited to join the Board in executive session are Superintendent Sandra Smyser and Assistant Board Secretary Valerie Stoddard.

Director Draper seconded the motion.

The voting was as follows:

Those voting AYE: Directors Donovan, Draper, Febvre, Gutowsky, Kipp, Petterson and Reed

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed 7-0

The executive session began at 8:36 p.m.

The executive session ended at 10:08 p.m.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

The Board meeting was adjourned at 10:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Stoddard
Assistant Secretary to the Board of Education