



Poudre School District Board of Education

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

Meeting Minutes

Minutes from Board of Education Business/Work Session Meeting
October 24, 2017

DINNER SESSION - 5:00 PM

PRESENT: President Cathy Kipp and Vice President David Trask; Directors Nate Donovan, Susan Gutowsky, Carolyn Reed, and Rob Petterson; 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; Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb

ABSENT: Director Christophe Febvre

1.0 District Issues / Board Member Updates

President Kipp noted that there will be no special Board meeting on Friday, November 3, 2017.

Superintendent Smyser needs to leave the business meeting early tonight.

Following the hearing tonight, the Board will take a 15-minute break.

Assistant Superintendent Scott Nielsen said he is in the process of setting a meeting time with the Directing Change organization.

Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb reviewed for the Board, the criteria to use in evaluation of the evening's charter school hearing (focus on high-level details, is the education proposal one you would like to see in the district, will it benefit kids, is it operational, etc.).

Following the hearing tonight, at the November 14, 2017 meeting, the Board will be called to take action on the charter. The Board needs to either, approve the charter with conditions, deny the charter (with reasons) because it does not seem viable, or deny the application for now but hold it open to solve outstanding issues.

Legal and Policy Counsel Crabb will send out drafts of these options to each Board member before the next meeting. They are confidential. The final vote will be public. There will be an executive session before the next business meeting (and before the Board is asked to vote), to address any legal issues.

The Board had questions.

Will the conditions be outlined in the option drafts? Yes; so please feel free to call Legal and Policy Counsel Crabb ahead of the meeting (with conditions so that they can be included for the meeting). Those kinds of discussions will be allowed in the executive session.

What is the Colorado Board of Education's role? The charter can be appealed to the State Board if denied by the local Board.

There are a lot of unfinished sections in the application; when will those pieces come in? It should all be in right now.

There is a chance that the Board could get additional application materials in the next few days and the Board may consider those materials. The information may continue to come in between now and the next meeting.

Assistant Superintendent Lambert reviewed the procedure for tonight's hearing. There will be introductions and then question and answer time. Public comment on this topic will happen during general community comment.

2.0 Agenda Planning

There was no discussion on this item.

The dinner session ended at 5:24 p.m.

BUSINESS MEETING/WORK SESSION - (BOARDROOM) – 5:30 PM

PRESENT: President Cathy Kipp and Vice President David Trask; Directors Nate Donovan, Susan Gutowsky, Carolyn Reed, and Rob Petterson; 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; Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb

ABSENT: Director Christophe Febvre

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

President Kipp called the work session meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

3.0 HEARING

3.1 Compass Community Collaborative School Charter Application Hearing

The Board thanked everyone who has worked on the charter application.

The Board will not take action on the charter tonight; that vote will happen at the November 14, 2017 Board meeting.

Assistant Superintendent Todd Lambert outlined the evening's hearing proceedings.

The Board will ask the charter applicants questions on the school's proposed budget/risk management/human resources, facilities/operations, and curriculum/instruction/assessment. Anything that does not fall into one of those categories will be discussed at the end. When appropriate, school district subject matter experts will also weigh in on the topics. Public comments on the charter application are welcome during the meeting's Community Comment time.

Assistant Superintendent Lambert thanked Jan Harrison for the charter application and thanked several district staff for their work on the charter application.

Jan Harrison, founding leader of the proposed charter, Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS), introduced herself and the school's executive design team. Ms. Harrison noted that there were several other people in the room who helped the team through this process.

Ms. Harrison introduced the proposed charter school's mission, core values and why they believe it's the right time for this school. Ms. Harrison also noted who they have partnered with throughout the community and the country to charter the school and explained why they believe it's the right time for the school.

The question and answer segment began for the first category (Budget, Risk Management and Human Resources).

(To view the entire hearing, please visit PSD On Demand)

Some of the questions the Board asked included:

- Executive Director Dave Montoya, what is your sense of the financial viability of the proposed charter? There were some deficiencies noted in the original budget, but it appears viable right now although the contingency reserve is very small.
- CCCS noted, we have received a gift of \$1 million to help start the school. It is from an anonymous donor. The district will need proof of this gift.
- Regarding the anonymous donor, if this is going to be a public school, there is a conflict with funding transparency. In a public school, funding sources need to be completely transparent.

- What or who is the angel investor that is referred to in the charter school application? Ms. Harrison clarified that it's an angel gift; the money is not from an investor.
- The revised budget follows year one, what about the recent requirements to increase PERA contributions? Ms. Harrison noted that they will also receive funds from the mill levy (to be shared from the district under recent legislation).
- Enrollment numbers – CCCS would want either double or triple the amount of applications for the school. How many do you have now? At this point, we have about 120 students committed to enroll in the school. Once we have charter approval, we will focus on recruitment.
- Is there a line item in the budget for site improvement? A significant portion of the angel gift may go into maintenance expenses.
- What did you feel was lacking in the district that prompted this charter application? Innovation and infrastructure of the entire system. We know that the district wants to innovate, but we want to step out of the large high schools and push change in a different way. The schools aren't lacking, but we want something different. There are waiting lists at some of the innovative schools (Polaris Expeditionary).
- In a more innovative school setting, how will you account for seat time? Seat time means being able to measure the number of hours in a seat, which is what restricts current public schools. Given this requirement, how are you going to deal with this issue to get full time funding? Off campus experiences will be group projects and an online program will help track hours in internships and apprenticeships. The state may change this requirement. Executive Director Montoya noted it may be dangerous to speculate that things will change. We may need more information from the Colorado Department of Education on seat time requirements.
- Who gets into this charter school? There are goals for enrollment; it will not be a weighted lottery. Everyone will go through a lottery system. The only exception will be for children of staff members and families who have volunteered, they will get priority.
- Regarding references to other like schools in your application materials - have you compared your budget and staff levels to those schools? How do you compare? No comparisons have been done.
- Do you have an employee handbook? When can we expect that the employee handbook is ready? Is there a fund to create the handbook? Has it been vetted by attorneys? Plan to use plant and grant money to hire an attorney to look at the employee handbook. This will take time (no completion date given).
- What is the salary schedule, benefits, etc.? Right now, the salaries are less than we wish they were. No clarification given on where the schedule or benefits are located/posted.
- Is there any risk that the free online programs you plan to use will cease free membership and increase fees? What will that do to your plans or budget? The system is free and five other schools in Colorado are using it now. There is no reason to believe it will not be free in the future.
- How will you manage risk for the internships at the businesses? How do you keep kids safe? We will use ImBlaze; their system of background checks and processes.
- What do you plan to do for employee health insurance? At this time, we do not have detailed information on insurance.

Based on the above information, the Board needs from the charter as soon as possible the following items:

1. Colorado Department of Education seat time requirements.
2. Proof of angel donation and more information on the donation.
3. A modified budget.

The Board had more questions on these topics.

- What will you do about teacher contracts? They will be on a yearly contract (not an at-will employer).
- A lot of work needs to go into page 61 of the application.
- It looks like the school is understaffed. The hours of work you expect look like they exceed the number of hours they could give to the school? The angel gift gives us the ability to add more staffing to the school. We will have a special counselor to run internships. We will work together as a team to stop burnout. The coteaching model we plan to use allows them to share the teaching load. There will be flex time periods for teachers, so there shouldn't be staff burnout.
- On page 54 of the application, LGBTQ omission was an oversight.
- Are the chrome books covered in your current budget? On November 17, we will find out if we received a grant to cover the chrome books. The grant is renewable for three years and then we will have to internally fund them.
- Where is the information on your IT staff funding? We will have a consultant. The kids will help repair the school's technology.

The question and answer segment began for the second category (Facilities and Operations).

- Have you had discussions with the owner about the GVA lease? The GVA site was a backup plan. We would like a more central location. Right now, we do not have a facility. We hope to have a place for the school by January. We would start remodeling the space at that time. We are no longer considering GVA as a site.
- Given the news that the school does not have a location, Executive Director Dave Montoya noted that he can no longer say the budget is viable. There are too many unknowns. He retracts his statement that the budget is viable.
- Board members noted concerns that there are not a lot of viable sites for a school in Fort Collins and cautioned that lease expenses might be higher than expected.
- Board members noted that given there is no known facility for the school, the budget doesn't work as presented in the application. There is no way of knowing at this point, how the budget will function and fit together.
- The Board needs a new plan and budget today. Ms. Harrison said they cannot give that information until they know the school location.
- There are a lot of questions that cannot be answered now about the facility.
- The numbers in the application are no longer relevant. Ms. Harrison noted that they are thinking 20-25 square feet per student should be sufficient as CCCS is not your typical

school. There will be no classrooms, no gym, no cafeteria, etc. Right now, they do not have a space for special needs students.

Based on the above information, the Board needs a modified budget and detailed explanations on perimeters they are looking at for the school's space (approximate square feet, timelines, ideas on what it would cost to renovate, food facility costs, move-in ready versus remodel, design criteria, rezoning information, traffic studies, etc.). The Board needs this information as soon as possible.

The question and answer segment began for the third category (Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction).

- How would a student transfer out of this school? We will design projects and track the standards being met through the projects. There are details we need to work out in this system.
- What is the standard's framework? Kids will track their own standards.
- Will students meet the criteria to graduate from high school? Yes, they will meet the standards. It was noted that the CDE may be moving towards recognizing these untraditional ways to meet graduation requirements. It could take years.
- The history curriculum content seems to be lacking? Anything lacking will be filled in by certified teachers.
- Summit Learning Platform, what is it? It's an important part of our curriculum. It's a tool to track what standards students are meeting. The system is flexible.
- What about student data privacy? We have a contract from Summit that talks about data privacy.
- Robert Beauchamp, PSD Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, will they really have the same content knowledge as a regular class? Director Beauchamp explained depth of knowledge as it pertains to curriculum. Ms. Harrison noted that they are hiring highly qualified teachers.
- How will you assess differently? We will do traditional assessments, as well as some experiential assessments.
- Summit Learning Platform, how does it map to the standards? We will meet the standards. We will use venture projects to meet some standards and rely on the certified teacher to fill in the gaps.
- Students with disabilities, are you prepared to do the staffing and state reporting to support these students? We will only serve students with mild needs. Our budget does not accommodate serving students with moderate needs.
- Please provide more information on how you will address special needs while traveling in the community (transportation, supervisors, training personnel). A Board member noted budget concerns in this area. CCCS noted, we would contract with the district or someone else to provide services to those students.
- English as a second language, how will you manage that and track progress? We hope the district will work with us in this area.

- PSD Director of Language, Culture and Equity, John McKay noted concern that the burden of proficiency will be on the student. What do internships look like for English language learners? Ms. Harrison noted that these students would have options.
- How would you ensure a diverse population of students? This is difficult to answer when we don't know the school location. We are considering grants to help fund public transportation for students who cannot get to school on their own.
- What does a transcript look like for a student who applies to college? There are specific entry requirements. We are pushing the boundaries on meeting graduation requirements. We will work with a student for as long as it takes and help them build skills. We are an equity school. We want to keep them at our school and empower them to finish their school career.
- Is Spanish the only language you will offer? At this time, yes.
- Ms. Harrison noted, we are looking to collaborate with community partners, but do not have exact numbers.

There was discussion about how CCCS will appoint members to their Board of Education (instead of electing members). We are looking for a diverse population. We would also like to have community representatives as it will be a community collaborative school. There will not be a lack of input from parents.

Ms. Harrison concluded the hearing by saying that the CCCS team will get back to the Board within a week on the required outstanding items.

The Board recessed at 9:30 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 9:45 p.m.

4.0 COMMUNITY COMMENT

Dr. Jose Valdes: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; this is a group of people with passion, vision, innovation and are willing to take a chance to better the student experience.

Gina Curler: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; sees an increase on homework and traditional academic performance in other schools and believes it is not working for all students. Bring the CCCS model of education to PSD to help students find and nurture their passion to learn.

Andrew Warnock: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; Currently does a lot of collaboration with students in PSD and is eager to collaborate with CCCS and open their doors for CCCS students from 1-3 p.m. everyday.

Craig Heacock: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; the group of educators behind this charter application are rock-stars and will do an amazing job.

Sam Gleeson: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; talked about working as a teacher and the challenges he faces, doesn't want to make small, slow changes, he wants to do more and believes CCCS can lead the way.

Chloe Harrington: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; hopes that by approval of the charter application, school work at CCCS can be relevant and meaningful and give students a sense of purpose. Would love to have a team of teachers to go to for help in classes. Would like students to have more options.

Josie Plaut: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; works and lives in applied learning and believes that it will work for Compass school. There is a need for this school in the district; please support it.

Andrea Delorey: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; believes in the vision that Compass has outlined and looks forward to working with CCCS to support their students in a variety of ways.

Carlos: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; spoke to his current experience at a Loveland high school. Would like his younger brothers to have a different and better experience than he has had in his Loveland school.

Kelly Alder: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; not usually a fan of charter schools, but is a fan of Compass It's an important school and educational model that will do great things for students in this district.

Dr. Ronnie Estele: Supports the Compass Community Collaborative School (CCCS) charter application; founder of the last charter school approved in PSD. They do not have high school in their charter school, but offers sincere support to CCCS.

5.0 CONSENT AGENDA

5.1 Personnel Action

5.2 CDE TIGER Grant

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

Director Petterson seconded the motion.

The voting was as follows:

Those voting AYE: Directors Donovan, Gutowsky, Kipp, Petterson, Reed, and Trask
Those voting NO: None
ABSENT: Director Febvre
Motion passed 6-0.

6.0 INFORMATIONAL REPORTS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

6.1 Monitoring/Policy Review: DE 1.0, General District Ends: Part Two

Director of Research and Evaluation Dr. Dwayne Schmitz presented this report.

Dr. Schmitz discussed how student data is being used to inform administrators and teachers on a multitude of levels (i.e. where resources and supports are needed) in the district and explained regression-discontinuity design. He also used graphs to demonstrate how administrators, teachers, etc. can spot evidence of closing achievement gaps.

Dr. Schmitz noted that the district will do this type of analysis every year.

The Board had questions.

Have teachers seen this data? Some yes and some no; the more teachers see and understand this information, the more useful the information becomes to everyone.

The Board noted that they are eager to continue this discussion in February 2018.

6.2 Legislative Discussion

The legislative subcommittee met and talked about proposed federal and state legislation.

During the November 18, 2017 community engagement session, the Board will talk about school financing.

Director Donovan drafted a letter to federal legislators regarding education issues the Board is interested in seeing legislators take on in upcoming sessions. He will bring it to the Board for approval in an upcoming meeting.

The Board continues to reach out to local legislators.

7.0 AGENDA PLANNING

There is a lot of interest in bringing back the charts, graphs and more discussion on data from Dr. Dwayne Schmitz prior to the February meeting.

8.0 ADJOURNMENT

Board meeting ended at 10:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyla Davis
Assistant Secretary to the Board of Education