



## Poudre School District Board of Education

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

# Meeting Minutes

Minutes from Special Business Meeting

June 14, 2018

### **SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING – 4:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: President Christophe Febvre, Vice President Susan Gutowsky; Directors Kristen Draper, Cathy Kipp, Rob Petterson and Carolyn Reed; Superintendent Sandra Smyser; Assistant Superintendents Todd Lambert and Scott Nielsen; Executive Director Danielle Clark, Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb

ABSENT: None

LATE: Director Nate Donovan arrived at 4:08 p.m.

#### **1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

President Febvre called the special meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

President Febvre presented Superintendent Smyser with a 5-year pin on behalf of Poudre School District.

Assistant Superintendent Scott Nielsen introduced PSD Director of Innovation and Learning Design Scott Elias and spoke to his extensive work experience.

Director Kipp moved that the Board of Education add the Legislative Agenda to Action Items, becoming Action Item 3.2.

Director Reed 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

#### **2.0 ACTIVITY / SUPERINTENDENT REPORT**

Superintendent Smyser spoke about improving the system and outcome for students using the analogy of an ecosystem with specific reference to a fish tank. Living organisms, plants, oxygenation, light, sound, food and more create a delicate balance. Introducing something new can create unexpected outcomes. Each teacher tries to create an eco-system in their classroom; sometimes one fish eats another, and sometimes wonderful things happen.

Attendees were invited to contemplate if current actions accomplish the goals of the environment and maximize opportunities; moving various things inside the ecosystem in the hope the entire aquarium does better. Superintendent Smyser distributed fish in various forms to Board members as a reminder of the concept.

### **3.0 ACTION ITEM**

#### **3.1 Third Addendum to Second Revised Superintendent Contract**

Director Draper moved that the Board of Education approve the Third Addendum to Second Revised Superintendent Contract and authorize the Board President to sign the Addendum attested by the Board Secretary.

Vice President Gutowsky seconded the motion.

The voting was as follows:

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

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: Director Petterson

Motion passed 6-0

#### **3.2 Legislative agenda for 2018-19**

Director Kipp moved that the Board approve the Legislative Agenda document for the 2018-19 school year.

Director Draper seconded the motion.

Board discussion included:

- Important to get this information in front of CASB soon.
- Committee did not discuss the document prior to meeting tonight.
- Bill requiring school districts to bus students into other school districts violates the single subject rule and may be subject to litigation. Colorado Governor has indicated he does not like this part of the bill.

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

### **4.0 WORK TOPICS**

#### **4.1 Innovation Center Idea**

Assistant Superintendent Scott Nielsen presented an update to the Innovation Center Idea and invited individuals to imagine a place where students can go farm-to-table with content curriculum involved, CNA and bioengineering or cosmetology with an avenue toward entrepreneurship, virtual reality and drones that connect directly to a career and lead to a degree, automotive and trades and

fabrication labs reflecting industry standards and streamlined directly to employment after high school. PSD is currently processing and dreaming of different pathways to make this a reality.

- CSU is currently building a Design Center with maker spaces and is excited about PSD student exposure in high school.
- Challenging to design a space that meets the needs of PSD students and community.
- Physical location of the facility should be central to ensure accessibility for all students.
- Verification that the facility aligns with Board values is required to move forward. Board members agreed to support the pursuit of information regarding the facility.
- Potential facility names are being considered including but not limited to the Applied Learning Center.
- Current line of thinking is to have teachers from traditional school sites also teach at the Center.
- Some school districts have more than one center as well as outdoor centers.
- Business leaders have expressed GPA plays less of a role than soft skills (i.e. showing up on time, doing what they are told, being trainable, etc.).
- Center is intended to benefit all students including those pursuing a trade or career directly out of high school as well as those planning to attend college or other post-secondary education.

#### **4.2 Student Think Tank**

Assistant Superintendent Scott Nielsen provided an update to the Board on the redesigned Student Think Tank.

- Current Student Think Tank activity is primarily taking place at Fort Collins High School and Rocky Mountain High School.
- Potential scenarios for future Think Tank meetings were discussed.
- Board will let administration know expectations regarding structure and outcome.
- Directors Draper and Petterson will form a committee and create a proposal to include information the Board would like to know as well as Board interaction, and present the proposal to Assistant Superintendent Scott Nielsen.

#### **4.3 Ends vs. Means**

Ends vs. Means is designed to enable the vision of the Board, resonate with the group and allow big ideas to come to fruition. Focusing on student outcomes and vision while learning to express opinions will be beneficial to the Board. Disagreements within the group allow opportunity to think and gain insight.

- Candor was requested along with trust in best intentions.
- Board responsibilities include District leadership at the appropriate level, holding the Superintendent and District accountable to the ends, limitations, and being effective community liaisons. Understanding of what is happening in the system beyond data is required to be effective leaders.
- Board informs Superintendent when something needs to be done but does not tell Superintendent how to complete the task.
- Communication editing word by word is not the role of the Board.

- When four or more Board members agree they speak as a Board; individual members may get frustrated and should then come to the Board to talk about the issue.
- Board members have different personalities and communication styles and should be comfortable stating an opinion. All voices should be heard. Members need to feel free to voice opinions without others taking it personally.
- Concerns should be brought before the Board President and Vice President before involving the Superintendent.
- Members must get comfortable with conversations including the Superintendent and consider this a group of eight instead of a group of seven.
- Nature of formal meetings does not allow time for transparent conversations about meaningful things. Board needs time for those conversations.
- Appearance that staff are cautious about information shared in front of the Superintendent and Board exists. Board prefers statements such as “I don’t know”, “I don’t have time to do that right now” or “I will have to get back to you on that” as opposed to inaccurate or incomplete information. Superintendent Smyser will inform staff of the Board request for honesty, accuracy and clarity.
- Clarification requested regarding Board member communication with staff; should members initiate communication with staff instead of going through the Board Secretary or Superintendent. Perception staff may be unwilling to say “no” to a Board Member request for communication despite an underlying desire not to have the communication exists.
- Protocol established: Board members will contact Board Secretary when requesting cabinet or staff communication.
- Board members should communicate requests for information with other members to alleviate duplication as well as instigate thought.
- Board members may choose to maintain the Superintendent monthly meeting but are not required to do so. Monday meetings prior to a Board meeting will still occur. Superintendent is authorized to cancel any meetings.
- Protocol established: Board members are responsible for communicating important information from individual Superintendent meetings to other members and trust this information will be shared at the appropriate time.
- Board requests follow-through on questions asked or documents requested from staff and assume responsibility for pursuing answers if information is not forthcoming.
- Superintendent, Board President and Assistant Board Secretary will note actionable items during Board meetings and communicate information to Board Secretary.
- Concern was expressed staff may not give an honest answer to questions if protocol requires them to go through the Superintendent.

#### **4.4 Board/Superintendent Relationship**

Discussion surrounding Board/Superintendent team effort and trust began when the Superintendent sent a letter to teachers regarding time off to attend the march in Denver. Board members communicated teacher response and assured the Superintendent of support.

- Board members must trust professionalism of staff and assume information received is honest, unbiased and serves best intention of students.

- Learning from past mistakes is crucial and the group of eight must trust, learn and try to do better.
- Lunch meetings provide an informal atmosphere and value through the opportunity to discuss issues with transparency while building relationships. Superintendent attendance is welcome.
- As elected officials, gatherings of four or more Board members must be published and governed in public. Venues should be comfortable for public participation. Decision made to hold lunch meetings every other month at the Partnership Center next year.
- Interest no longer exists in creating a Facebook page, but members may investigate Facebook Live broadcasts from community engagement sessions for those who cannot attend. Concern was raised regarding need for special audio and video equipment and staff to run it.
- Facebook Outreach Committee is composed of Directors Draper and Petterson.

Board recessed at 7:54 p.m.

Board reconvened at 8:03 p.m.

#### **4.5 Legislative Session Reporting and Consensus**

Consensus regarding the current legislative committee with respect to committee size and amount of time spent at each Board meeting was requested.

Board discussion included:

- Information presented at Board meetings can be difficult to follow.
- Need to ensure content does not become so big it loses value.
- Important PSD follow and support legislation; definitely having an impact and making a difference with the help of our lobbyist.
- Setting the legislative agenda at the beginning of the year is a starting point. Other bills come up after setting that agenda. The committee helps set direction.
- Protocol established: Legislative Committee is entrusted with making decisions on predictable bills on behalf of the Board. Any bills of concern will be brought to the Board during Dinner Session. If legislative committee requires additional input an amendment will be made to the agenda for the BOE meeting to discuss further.

#### **4.6 Year in Review**

No items were discussed.

#### **4.7 Looking Forward**

Director Petterson will be out of town for the August 14, 2018 Board of Education meeting and will provide input prior to the meeting.

Director Petterson will be out of town December 3, 2018 through January 6, 2019 and requested approval from the Board to attend a meeting from Berlin over the phone. A resolution will be presented prior to the absence.

Mr. Petterson will not be attending the CASB retreat from December 6-9, 2018.

**5.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Brunner  
Assistant Secretary to the Board of Education