



## 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 10, 2017

### **DINNER SESSION - 4:30 PM**

**PRESENT:** President Cathy Kipp and Vice President David Trask; Directors Nate Donovan, Christophe Febvre, 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:** None

### **1.0 District Issues/Board Member Updates**

President Kipp moved that the Board go into executive session as authorized by C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)(b) to confer with legal counsel and receive legal advice on matters regarding litigation over the district's ballot language for the November 2016 election and financial matters related to the voter-approved mill levy override and bond issue. Individuals invited to join the Board and Superintendent in executive session are Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb, Executive Directors Montoya and Clark, and Assistant Board Secretary Davis.

Directors Gutowsky and Petterson seconded the motion.

The voting was as follows:

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

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed 7-0.

The executive session started at 4:34 p.m.

The executive session ended at 5:08 p.m.

During the dinner session meeting, some members of the Student Think Tank joined the Board for discussion. There are (regularly) 12 students on the Think Tank who represent all of the high schools in the district.

### **Debrief from CASB Conference:**

- Students noted it was helpful to hear from other school districts – what their issues are, how they are handling them and how it relates to our district and our issues.
- They talked about designed thinking – coming up with new ideas through collaboration; really understanding a problem and making a solution for the problem while always keeping in mind the people who will be helped by the solution.
- The experience with other groups was invaluable. There are many ways to tackle issues; more options than originally thought and new opportunities to try things differently.
- They noted that some students don't have much contact with their school board, while other smaller districts meet more often with students.

### **What is the Think Tank working on this year?**

- Mental health is their focus for the year; specifically, building a positive school environment. Mental health is very important to students and it has a direct link to graduation rates. Students don't always drop out because they are unmotivated. A lot of times it's for reasons linked to emotional/mental issues.
- Mental Health Forum Updates.
  1. They feel like peer counseling programs are not effective. The current model lacks confidentiality and does not meet students' needs for a safe atmosphere. Older students or psychology majors in college might be better peers. The current student counselors are not as invested in the process as they should be. Students who seek out the peer counseling may not believe in the program as the students "counseling" them might lack passion, or compassion to help them and are in an entirely different mindset. It creates a forced atmosphere. It was noted that a club made up of students dealing with a common issue was started at Rocky Mountain High School and that support group has been successful.
  2. Meeting with school counselors when struggling with mental illness is very beneficial to students. Better access to counselors would be very helpful. This was number one for students. Counselors are very stretched for time. Students feel they need more counseling services in school.
  3. Better support from teachers – better training for teachers who can help students who are struggling with mental health issues.
  4. Include a unit on mental health in their physical/health education classrooms so that students get answers in class; they know what they are dealing with and have resources.
  5. Encouraged a mental health education day. Take a day to introduce students to mental illness, what it is, where to find resources on substance abuse, mental health programs, etc.
- Discussion among Board and Student Think Tank about working on communication. We have resources but students don't know about them. Hand out booklets in freshman advisory classes or at main entrances, etc. Start an effective campaign for the resources that are already available. Use mental health experts in the district for guidance.

**Student Input on Board of Education Agenda Items from Fall Semester:**

- The Think Tank needs more details/background on some topics they were asked to give feedback on. For example, they would like clarification on topics like “closing the gap.”

**Discussion of Future Think Tank Work and Giving Effective Input to the Board of Education:**

- Find a balance that keeps students in the loop on the Board’s work, but also allows time to work on projects that have special meaning to the Think Tank.
- The Board encouraged students to attend more Board meetings and take advantage of the community comment time to give feedback on those specific topics that interest them.
- The Board might need to identify a point person who could relate upcoming topics to the Think Tank.
- Consider conducting interviews with graduated seniors (some schools already do this) to gather valuable feedback on improving schools.

The Board thanked the Student Think Tank members for their time.

The dinner session ended at 6:19 p.m.

**REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING - (BOARDROOM) – 6:30 PM**

PRESENT: President Cathy Kipp and Vice President David Trask; Directors Nate Donovan, Christophe Febvre, 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: None

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

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

**2.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**3.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

There were no changes to the agenda.

#### **4.0 RECOGNITIONS AND REPORTS**

Executive Director Danielle Clark introduced the recognitions for the evening.

##### **4.1 2016 Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) School**

Fossil Ridge High School earned designation from the American School Counselor Association as a Recognized ASCA Model Program (RAMP) school.

Director Donovan presented a certificate of recognition to Fossil Ridge High School's entire counseling team on behalf of the Board and PSD.

##### **4.2 YES 4 PSD Kids Campaign**

Yes 4 PSD Kids is a community coalition in Northern Colorado which encouraged citizens to vote for the 2016 Bond and Mill Levy Override to support Poudre School District kids.

Director Febvre presented a certificate of recognition to volunteer Len Roark for the committee on behalf of the Board and PSD.

##### **4.3 2016 AVID National Demonstration School**

Wellington Middle School has been re-validated as an Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) National Demonstration School through Fall 2019.

Director Gutowsky presented a certificate of recognition to the school on behalf of the Board and PSD.

##### **4.4 Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Smyser reported on recent activities including school visits and meetings with city and county officials, leadership at the Coloradoan, with other Superintendents, PSD staff and principals.

This is a busy time of year in the district and one piece of that is preparation for the 2017-2018 school year. Kindergarten, middle and high school program visits are happening right now. Kindergarten registration begins in February. The district's deadline is quickly approaching for school of choice applications.

#### **4.5 Board Report**

Director Petterson presented the Board report.

The Board attended several school events throughout the district.

They held a special meeting on December 29<sup>th</sup> to approve the 2016 CAFR.

The Board is actively involved in researching the optional School Health Services (Medicaid) program for the district and has attended several meetings on the topic. In addition, they have held training and development events, community engagement sessions and informal Board lunches.

They have attended several community and town hall meetings, meeting with community members, various legislators and lobbyists.

#### **5.0 COMMUNITY COMMENT**

Mike Pruznick: Commented on the importance of trust and community engagement. Would like clarification on the criteria used by the district to choose which individuals or groups are recognized at Board meetings. Questions the legality of tax collected through TIFF; this is an issue that requires continuous attention.

Renee Ostergren: Employed by the district for 27 years and is concerned that participation in the Medicaid program will have a very negative impact on students and staff. Extensive amounts of work go into supporting students who have very significant needs. In pursuing Medicaid funding, we take on a lot of extra administrative work and lose valuable direct interaction time with students.

Trish Atherly: Licensed occupational therapist for PSD who also served on the advisory board that identified where the Medicaid funds went in past years. The process was very difficult at that time and cautions that participating in Medicaid (again) may not be a good idea. There were negative consequences for students. The program had a negative financial impact on the district. Staff is already under a lot of stress and time constraint; this program will add ethical pressures by forcing them to “stretch” billing codes for funding purposes.

Lila Bartmann: Licensed occupational therapist and department lead in PSD. In the past, she was tasked with billing Medicaid and is familiar with the coding policies. The funds that came back from Medicaid did not necessarily benefit the students that were being billed for the services. The time and costs required to train and keep documentation were substantial. There are difficult ethical questions that occur when billing for this program. Parents of students with special needs had a lot of concerns with it as well.

President Kipp noted that there will be an extensive discussion on the Medicaid program during the January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017 meeting. Please email any questions you have on this topic to the Board prior to the meeting so we can address them.

## **6.0 CONSENT AGENDA**

### **6.1 Personnel Action**

### **6.2 Meeting Minutes from December 13, 2016**

### **6.3 Director Electronic Attendance at 1/24/17 Board Meeting**

### **6.4 2017-18 Kindergarten Tuition**

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

Director Gutowsky seconded the motion.

The voting was as follows:

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

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed 7-0.

## **7.0 INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

### **7.1 Long Range Facilities Plan Update**

Executive Director of Operations Pete Hall presented the Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan including information on new construction, ongoing facilities improvements, and short-term growth management.

The district is currently working with Windsor Plains, the city of Loveland, and the city of Windsor on the southeast elementary school site. The school's design is based on the Bethke (school) model and modified with changes required per current code requirements.

The district has had numerous meetings on the road, utility, facility, and construction needs of the Prospect site. They are using the model of Fossil Ridge High School, but again, codes have changed and modifications will be necessary. Plans at this site include an athletic field.

Sites are still under consideration for a school location in Wellington.  
A permanent addition to Zach Elementary is still in the planning stages.

The district continues to do the work they can at each site while awaiting court judgment on the bond and mill levy. The start dates are very unclear; the delay impacts construction and costs.

There is one more year of projects to do from the 2010 bond. The biggest projects are done, everything else will finish up this year.

Superintendent Smyser noted the need for a bigger conversation about flexible space design in school construction. The basic core is adequate, but that's not the full plan. There should be discussions about how to design that space to meet post-secondary workforce readiness goals.

Hall addressed community concerns about the costs of our buildings being much higher than the construction costs of similar buildings in other districts. The architect firm will be invited to an upcoming Board meeting to present specific information on why costs are higher in our city.

## **8.0 DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **8.1 New Policy IKF-4 Graduation Guidelines (First Reading)**

Robert Beauchamp, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment presented information on the new Graduation Guidelines policy (IKF-4).

The Board considered draft graduation guideline language at the November 22, 2016 Board meeting. This is now the policy language for IKF-4. The policy incorporates the Colorado State Board of Education's identified and approved standards.

The district has shared the new policy with community groups and gathered feedback.

The recommendation to the Board from the Curriculum and Instruction department is to adopt the entire menu of Readiness Measures along with the state-approved criteria and cut scores. This recommendation will give students options and flexibility to identify their path to success. In addition, they recommend keeping current PSD graduation requirements.

Questions from the Board prompted a discussion that included an in-depth explanation of the supports that are in place to help students meet the core requirements and the need to continually improve tracking, monitoring software (dashboard) and processes in order to identify students who are falling behind as early as possible.

At the February 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, the department will report on their progress to expand course and credit options. In the spring of 2017, the new requirements will be communicated to students and families. President Kipp asked that the department share their plans with the District Advisory Board.

The Board discussed economic and financial literacy requirements and debated whether they could be combined into one requirement. Right now, financial literacy is a stand-alone requirement in the district. The Board would welcome a personal financial literacy teacher to attend a meeting and clarify the class curriculum.

Pending the department's follow-up work, all Board members agreed that a second reading of the policy can go on the January 28<sup>th</sup> consent agenda.

## **8.2 Monitoring/Policy Review: EL 2.0, General Executive Limitations**

Superintendent Smyser reviewed General Executive Limitations Policy 2.0.

The policy provides for monitoring of the Board's District Ends and Executive Limitations policies to determine the degree to which the Board's policies are being met.

Legal Counsel Tom Crabb explained changes that were made to the policy (e.g. removed redundant policies, policy was removed because it was something already prescribed by the law, etc.). The intent behind the changes was to make the policy and practice more effective and better for the district.

The Board approved the policy review.

## **8.3 Internal Monitoring Report-First Semester Review: EL 2.1, Treatment of Students, Parents/Guardians & General Public**

Executive Director Danielle Clark presented information on the district's most recent work and collaborations with the community.

The district solicited input from the general public on the long range plan and 2017-2018 calendar. Clark noted that the Board may be asked to approve a possible revision to the 2017-2018 proposed calendar.

In the last year, Poudre School District facilities were reserved for use by various community organizations 13,565 times.

In 2016-2017, 28.3% of total district enrollment were choice students. In the future, we will see this number go down due to the school choice policy change that was implemented last fall.

The district revised their "response to inquiries" policy. In the past, cabinet members were required to respond to all inquiries within five days. The policy was revised to note that certain types of communicate received by the district do not warrant a response (for example, someone commenting on a calendar change or someone using profanity/abusive language,

etc.). Additionally, this policy change covers situations where a staff member is out of the office for an extended amount of time and a response in five days or less is not possible.

With the exception of the word “curate” in the “responses to inquires” section (revised version, last sentence), a word the Superintendent has agreed to change, the Board approves the policy.

#### **8.4 Monitoring/Policy Review: EL 2.4, Financial Planning and Budgeting**

Executive Director Dave Montoya presented this policy that addresses the district’s ability to budget and plan for financial activity. He explained the step-by-step process they follow to move budget development forward, while still receiving stakeholder input.

Montoya highlighted the following finance items as they relate to the policy:

- A large portion of the budget is personnel costs; things that happen in negotiations.
- In the past, the district’s expenditures have aligned well with budgeted amounts.
- Explained the district’s fund balance history, reserves and the different fund categories.
- Reviewed in detail the district’s reserves. At the next Board meeting, there will be more details on the amount of money in the reserves.
- The district did not incur any external debt to meet cash flow obligations.

The amount of state money to the district continues to decrease and this is a problem. At the January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Board meeting, Montoya will present budget priority ideas for the Board’s consideration.

The Board approved this policy.

#### **8.5 LEGISLATIVE DISCUSSION**

The state legislative session for this year begins January 11<sup>th</sup> and ends May 10<sup>th</sup>. The Board will submit a document of district topics and priorities to our legislators.

The Board made final changes to the document.

This year during the legislative session, legislators will have to tackle the state’s negative factor. It was noted that only 38% of the state budget goes to education and with a major fund imbalance in play, it’s likely we will see a decrease in that funding. Community members need to know how much our students are underfunded by the state (in comparison to other states).

The Board agreed to add a more concrete statement about the budget to the district’s legislative agenda.

The Board also discussed updates and changes to improve the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) and the potential of a bill being drafted that would change state assessment requirements.

## **9.0 SUPERINTENDENT PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

### **9.1 Executive Session: Superintendent Evaluation, Part 1 of 3**

Director Donovan moved to 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, Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb, and Assistant Board Secretary Kyla Davis.

Director Petterson seconded the motion.

The voting was as follows:

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

Those voting NO: None

ABSENT: None

Motion passed 7-0.

The Executive Session started at 9:35 p.m.

The Executive Session ended at 12:42 a.m. on January 11, 2017.

## **10.0 ADJOURNMENT**

Board meeting ended at 12:42 a.m. on January 11, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyla Davis  
Assistant Secretary to the Board of Education