



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
October 25, 2016

DINNER SESSION - 5:30 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, and Victoria Thompson; Interim Executive Director Dustin Reintsma, Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb

ABSENT: None

LATE ARRIVAL: Director Susan Gutowsky

1.0 District Issues / Board Member Updates

The Alsbury retreat is coming up in a few months. The Board needs to send Dr. Alsbury district (background) information, take a pre-survey and review any questions they have for him.

A subcommittee consisting of Directors Petterson and Reed will begin to gather information for the meeting and call Dr. Alsbury on November 9th at 9 a.m. Superintendent Smyser will join the subcommittee at Embassy Suites for the call.

The Board discussed some questions and information in regard to the Alsbury meeting (e.g. need for an agenda, what is he doing beforehand, what is Board doing in preparation, etc.).

The NSBA conference is in March; details/logistics as they pertain to the district were discussed. There is no need for action by the Board at this time; commuting, carpool, and lodging details will be decided closer to the conference date.

The audit committee met on Thursday. Director Febvre was pleased with the information and insight he received from the meeting. He reported on details. There was discussion about (new) Assistant Superintendent Scott Nielsen and (new) Athletic Director Russ McKinstry meeting with the audit committee.

Director Petterson gave a review of the recent District Advisory Council meeting where topics included district and school performance framework.

Director Reed reported on Early Childhood meetings. That department has been working on the adjustment to all-day preschool for Headstart (new federal requirement). They have added positions to

the department. Space is a challenge; they do not have the room to grow. Feedback from parents is positive, but they have concerns about reverting back to half-day Kindergarten after 2 years of full-day preschool.

Directors Donovan and Reed met with Medicaid School Health Services Program Administrator Shannon Huska regarding Medicaid for schools in PSD. They had a lot of questions for her and look forward to the Superintendent's report on the subject.

Community engagement meetings were not well attended. A newly formed subcommittee to address this topic is working on different options.

The fire incident at Fossil Ridge High School was discussed. The Board praised the handling of the situation. The people involved acted quickly and correctly.

The Board asked Vicki Thompson to mail a grant application to them, in advance of the vote, so that there is time to review it.

The dinner session ended at 5:57 p.m.

BUSINESS MEETING/WORK SESSION - (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, and Victoria Thompson; Interim Executive Director Dustin Reintsma, Legal and Policy Counsel Tom Crabb

ABSENT: None.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

President Kipp called the work session meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

3.0 COMMUNITY COMMENT

Mike Pruznick: Feels the Board is losing community trust and noted those things he thought were either conflicts of interest within the district or the Board's inability to be impartial (to some things).

Noted concerns about items discussed in small meetings that should have been done more formally at business meetings.

Mary Rapisardo: Parent to a PSD high school student; sees suicide and depression in the district as a real issue. Students are counseling each other due to a lack of counseling services. The current services are marginal and create a mental health crisis. A federally funded program could help our district; every other large district in the state uses it. The gains outweigh administrative costs; please support participation in this program.

Mike Demma: Long-time resident of Fort Collins and involved in Poudre School District for decades. Kids have always been the focus in PSD. The community needs to vote yes on both 3B and 3C. PSD has gone into the community to get input, has done the research and is very organized. PSD will follow through to make sure the money and management of the funds and projects are done well.

Todd Devine: His experience with PSD spans over 20 years. He has been in several schools and in each location, the students and teachers were provided everything they needed for success. The district has done a thorough job planning and talking to the community. In PSD, every dime is spent carefully and with much thought. He asked the community to continue to support our students.

DJ Anderson: Thanked the Board for the bond and mill levy on the ballot this November. He is grateful for the warm responses he is hearing in the community, on his committees and from parents. It is the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education's recognition this month of family, school and community partnerships. He asked everyone to visit the website (SACPIE) for more information and great opportunities to get involved.

Pam Kilness: Retired PSD counselor who believes more school counselors are needed in the district. Over the years, there has been a significant increase in mental illness, depression, anxiety, etc. Several schools do not have counselors in PSD and others are severely understaffed. The district should use funds from a Medicaid program to address the issue. Please pursue these available funds; consider participating in the program.

Tena Green: Proud PSD mother who noted the importance of students being physically and emotionally fit to learn. Districts of this size throughout the state all seem to have funding from a Medicaid program; grant funding is available for our schools. The paperwork is worth the benefit. Please stop leaving federal money on the table and pursue all available funding to save our students' lives.

Eric Sutherland: Father to PSD student responded to a written statement made by Director Petterson following his comments at a past school Board meeting. He feels there are abuses in the system and continues to have concerns on the mill levy rate; noting there are tax laws that protect community members. Tax increment financing is not the law.

4.0 CONSENT AGENDA

4.1 Personnel Action

- 4.2 Revisions to Policy EL 2.6, Asset Protection**
- 4.3 Approval of 2017-2018 School Year Calendar**
- 4.4 Cancellation of November 8, 2016 Regular Business Meeting**
- 4.5 School Accreditation and Request to Reconsider**
- 4.6 Colorado's Mathematics and Science Partnership Program Grant Approval**

Director Petterson made a motion to adopt and approve the recommended action for the remaining items on the consent agenda.

Director Donovan 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.

5.0 WORK SESSION TOPICS

5.1 District and School Performance Frameworks

Assistant Superintendent Jinger Haberer gave a presentation on district and school performance frameworks. It is a multi-year plan; there will be several updates throughout the year.

PSD is not just concerned about state monitoring reports, but cares about serving the whole student. The purpose of the frameworks is to give communities an apples-to-apples comparison and give target dates for improvement.

It was noted that due to a new parent opt-out option, there could be low participation resulting in inaccurate reflections of schools. The results will need to be interpreted differently.

Haberer highlighted changes in accountability in the frameworks, discussed plan categories and key performance indicators including achievement, growth and postsecondary workforce readiness and the new State Board approved targets in those areas.

Board members had questions about the accuracy of matriculation targets (noting how military-bound and "gap year" students are not reflected in that data) and wondered whether PSD can go to the State Board of Education with concerns about potential problematic measuring (matriculation).

There was discussion about the timing of the UIP (Unified Improvement Plan) and monitoring reports. The Board doesn't want to approve the UIP before they see the monitoring report.

Superintendent Smyser noted that data is constantly informing the UIP work and therefore the district has to be dynamic in its response to the system. The reports will be intentional in framing how they work together; they will interrelate.

5.2 PWR Quarterly Update

Assistant Superintendent Jinger Haberer introduced Post-Secondary Workforce Readiness Director Sheila Pottorff. Director Pottorff gave a review of the work that has been done so far in this area.

Director Pottorff's presentation included discussion of the Colorado Career Cluster map (cluster of classes with a specific career path focus) and the success of Poudre High School's Pathways program. Students give very positive feedback from that program. They travel through school as a cohort and enjoy seeing the same students in classes; gives them comfort and a stronger feeling of connectedness.

Director Pottorff explained several handouts with information about the district's work-based learning internships and apprenticeships and discussed the Readiness Team working on these initiatives. Pottorff gave details on the specific skills, certifications and opportunities offered to students in these programs and the ASCENT program. It was noted that PSD families have saved nearly \$1 million dollars in tuition fees through these high school opportunities.

The district is looking at new software that supports students and teachers by mapping the 6th-12th grade journey.

The Board thanked Director Porttoff for the presentation.

There was question and discussion about the ASCENT program and the lack of available scholarships for students who would like to take college courses in high school but cannot afford the option.

The Board asked about finding validation in the Pathways program; do students continue on set paths and if so, are they properly prepared? It was noted that feedback has been good from organizations that work closely with the district on these programs. Constant communication between students, parents and counselors is critical to the success of these programs.

There was discussion regarding outreach and work on gaps in achievement. The District is working to connect with several different organizations to provide opportunities for all students, including kids consistently in the lower percentile. When students have connections in their pathways and know other students, they have more confidence and perseverance.

Director Porttoff wrapped up the presentation by noting upcoming timelines. By March, there will be a Readiness Team in place and by next year, the new software to support these programs will be ready. Communication and work on the website are ongoing projects.

5.3 Graduation Rates Update

Assistant Superintendent Jinger Haberer gave an update on the current state of graduation rates and action the district is taking to increase rates.

Some of PSD's 2016-2017 "next steps" to increase graduation in our district include using dashboard, offering flexible schedules, more post-work readiness opportunities, mentorships/advisory structures and a stronger focus on (middle to high school) transition years.

Craig Woddall, Principal of Rocky Mountain High School gave insight into the big picture complexities as they pertain to graduation rates at his school.

Rocky Mountain High School teachers Scott Jones and Brian Mierzwa serve as interventionists at their school to help track and support students throughout their high school journey, making sure they are in the right place and on the right path.

The Rocky Mountain High School panel noted how student's success in the ninth grade is critical. If they fall behind at that point due to academic struggles, mental health or drug abuse it is incredibly difficult to overcome. If a student loses hope, their likelihood of graduation greatly diminishes. They try to continually instill hope for students at every level and recognize that students want to be successful but they need skills, social skills and a feeling of connection.

The panel explained their Voyager program; screening, placement and monitoring systems. They look at 100% of their students' test scores, course registrations, attendance stats and more. They receive information from eighth grade teachers to get a complete picture of their students. Using all information, they identify students who might need support and work hard to set them up for success. They meet on a weekly basis and monitor and evaluate the program throughout the year. Frequent and focused support for their students is what makes the program so successful.

Board recessed at 9:06 p.m.

Board reconvened at 9:15 p.m.

5.4 Monitoring Report: DE 1.0, General District Ends

Director of Research and Evaluation, Dwayne Schmitz presented new information from the recently completed Student Connections Survey. This survey was given to 4th – 12th grade students in the district.

Director Schmitz reported a relatively high response rate of 70% and that students were proportionately represented in the survey. The reliability of the survey rated at an acceptable level (gave an explanation of that process).

The goal of the survey is to figure out how many students feel connected; the goal is to have 100% student connection.

Director Schmitz reviewed the detailed results from each level of school (elementary, middle and high school) and the connection students feel between adults in school, other students in school and connections to their interests and passions.

The Board thanked Director Schmitz for the presentation and had several points of discussion including students who opt out of the survey and how the survey will improve in the future (e.g. get better at measuring constructs of survey and changing the language at different levels) and who can see the survey results and to what level of detail.

5.5 Legislative Discussion

President Kipp reported on committee work, including a recent meeting with the district's lobbyist to look at proactive pieces of legislations and begin work on the district's list of priorities.

Board members continue to meet with legislators.

There were too many conflicts for the November 8th meeting, so it is cancelled.

The next meeting Board is November 22nd. It will be a short business meeting followed by the annual legislative meeting at 7:30 (with invited legislators – newly elected officials and their incumbents).

6.0 ADJOURNMENT

Board meeting ended at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyla Davis
Assistant Secretary to the Board of Education