

**School District No. 1J, Multnomah County, Oregon
Board Work Session of January 15, 2019**

INFORMAL MINUTES

A Work Session of the Board of Directors came to order at 6:07 pm at the call of Chair Rita Moore in the Board Auditorium at the Blanchard Education Service Center, 501 N. Dixon Street, Portland, Oregon, 97227.

There were present:

Board

Rita Moore, Chair
Paul Anthony
Scott Baily
Julia Brim-Edwards
Amy Kohnstamm
Mike Rosen
Julie Esparza Brown, Vice-Chair
Nick Paesler, Student Representative

Staff

Guadalupe Guerrero, Superintendent

Discussion: Two Proposed Resolutions from the Portland Association of Teachers (PAT)

Suzanne Cohen and Elizabeth Theil of PAT, reported on the Week of Action for Black Lives Matter. Ms. Cohen provided the history and context of the requested resolution. Director Brim-Edwards stated that she would like this resolution to occur on an annual basis, and if the District decides to endorse it, she would like more specifics. She would like to see what we are endorsing and what activities students would be participating in. Director Brim-Edwards suggested that perhaps the Board might have more definition before the January 29th meeting when the resolution would be considered. Superintendent Guerrero commented that, for this year, teachers will be provided license and flexibility in planning activities for February 4-8. Chair Moore asked for a Board member to coordinate with PAT and staff to draft a resolution that would combine the history month within the resolution. Vice-Chair Esparza Brown and Director Brim-Edwards volunteered to work with PAT and the Superintendent's designee in drafting the resolution and bringing it to the January 22nd Board Work Session for review.

Ms. Cohen reviewed the draft public school funding resolution. Again, Vice-Chair Esparza Brown and Director Brim-Edwards volunteered to work on the school funding resolution, making it more specific to PPS.

Draft 2019-20 School Calendar

Superintendent Guerrero presented the draft 2019-20 School Calendar to the Board. The proposal is to adopt the calendar at the Board's January 29th meeting. Director Brim-Edwards stated that she thought a lot of families will support the pre-Labor Day school start date. Director Bailey mentioned that one problem with opening in late August was that most of our schools were very hot. Vice-Chair Esparza Brown suggested starting school two days earlier than indicated so that students have a full, first week of school before the Labor Day weekend.

Presentation: PSU Enrollment Projects and the Portland Plan

Charles Rynerson of PSU and Joe Zehnder with the City of Portland, reported on enrollment projections and the Portland Plan. Director Kohnstamm commented that PSU forecasts have been relatively right on the mark. Mr. Zehnder stated that the City was in the process of re-engineering to accommodate the growth strategy of the Portland Plan; we need to get more units out of the land we have, and we want a permanent supply of affordable housing. Chair Moore asked how the City and school districts interact. Mr. Zehnder responded that the City works well with PPS; they share information with PSU, and they are interested in supporting the needs of PPS in the neighborhoods that are growing. The City has a comprehensive plan and a forecast for 25 years, and the District receives an annual check-on on that. Mr. Zehnder added that the dilemma was that this is the first year the City has declared school infrastructure as a critical piece that can be considered a constraint on the ability to grow. The City determined that David Douglas was the district that was not able to raise funds to meet their needs, so the City downzoned David Douglas a bit. The City has looked at the inner city and its growth and has discussed additional schools to serve those households. They have had the development capacity on the books since the 1980s. Vice-Chair Esparza Brown commented that other states make developers contribute to school facility needs. Director Kohnstamm responded that in Oregon, a developer cannot be charged System Development Charges for schools. Chair Moore mentioned that depending on what type of development occurs, the District will have a lot of kids or no kids. She worries about the development that is going on and parts of town where we will see declining enrollment in future years, and other areas the schools will be busting at the seams. Superintendent Guerrero stated that PPS is about to go into its own process of boundaries and planning in the next school year. Director Bailey indicated that, nationally, 63% of households are owner occupied. Within PPS, it is already in the lost 50s. Director Bailey asked if the City was zoning to make that number below 50%. Mr. Zehnder replied that he did not think you could draw that conclusion. In a 4-plex model, there is no reason they could not be owner occupied. Even multi-unit apartment buildings can be owner occupied.

Parks and Recreation IGA for Grant Parking Easement

Sara King, Director of Planning and Asset Management, provided background information on the Grant Parking Easement. Director Kohnstamm questioned if there was any discussion around cost sharing on the improvements themselves. Ms. King responded that if it is a PPS project and we were initiating it, we pay for the infrastructure. She wasn't sure if the District asked the City if they would pay, but she was pretty sure they would have said no. Dan Jung, Chief Operating Officer, stated that Ms. King was correct; we had asked if the City would share the cost of maintenance and the City told us no. Director Bailey commented that he didn't see why PPS doesn't get exclusive use of the parking lot during the daytime. Ms. King responded that if we were to push that request, she feels PPS would have more to lose than Parks would. In the spirit of cooperation, she thought we work without signage or without exclusive use during certain hours. If we have a problem we would talk to the City about it. The Parks Bureau would be using the parking lot during the summer for pool use; PPS wouldn't need as much parking in the summer. Chair Moore stated that she thought the Board was saying to be more assertive in dealing with the City in the future.

Summary of PPS Community Engagement Processes and Lessons Learned

Superintendent Guerrero indicated that he had contracted with Jason Trombley to prepare a report of past initiatives that brought PPS to where it is today. Mr. Trombley reported that 2001 was his senior year in high school and performing the research for the report provided a view of what happened after he graduated. The time period of the report (2001-2019) is Student Representative Nick Paesler's cohort for his entire life. Even with all the change, communities stood up again and again and tried to fight back on what was imposed on the system. In 2001-2007, PPS faced a \$148 million shortfall and a decline of 8,000 students in those years. Communities were asked which schools should be closed. There are 40 resolutions from the Board between 2007 and 2008 which directed system change. The 2001 Local Option Levy began and coming into this school year, PPS has received over \$690 million dollars. That is greater than the operating budget for this school year. Communities invested that money into PPS. With

the bonds that have passed, that was another \$1 billion to PPS. Communities were impacted differently; promises were not equally or equitably honored. With the Visioning Process, this is the prime time to build a new contract with families and children for the next generation and PPS needs to deliver on its promises. PPS needs to decide what it wants to achieve and make sure they deliver it to the students.

Mr. Trombley thanked all those who kept him and his students safe during boundary committee meetings.

Chair Moore asked Mr. Trombley for his takeaway lessons from his report. Mr. Trombley responded that: 1) every process PPS initiates has to align with the vision you want for the system and has to be clearly defined by the goals of the system; 2) don't underestimate the power of what students can do; we had student representatives on D-BRAC and they were very open on what they wanted; 3) don't let a process run forever; it needs a clear start and end date; 4) don't do a lot of processes at once; and, 5) if you are going to do a process and look at a bold change, only vote for what you can ensure the system will deliver. Align with your budget system.

Director Brim-Edwards stated that she was on the Board when the report begins in 2001. It was a time of an ending fund balance of \$200,000 and then we went into a recession. The District had a footprint that could handle 70,000 students, but enrollment was down to 45,000 students. It was the worst possible thing to go through as a Board Member because you were closing schools that were important to people. It was a thoughtful process, but no one wants their school to close. Mr. Trombley mentioned that communities and parents had lived through all of that. With the Visioning Process, you really have the chance to set new expectations. You can model how to push PPS forward.

Chair Moore stated that quite a bit of the report revolves around enrollment. Some of the actions taken during the enrollment decline were short-sighted. Some of the responses didn't leave us enough flexibility to deal with a changing future. We made long-term decisions that we regret now. She personally regrets the sale of Washington High School. As a Board member today, we have to remember what we do today could affect PPS 5-10 years down the road. She did not think they have any idea of what could happen to enrollment in ten years.

Director Anthony commented that one of the things that leapt out to him is that the Board has to be aggressively asking questions about issues. When we are short of funds, are we going to be making decisions that free up funds? PPS closed Humboldt because the District was short of money. The most we ever saved a year from that closing was \$60,000. The Board has to understand what we are voting on and consistently questioning perceived wisdom. The report helps to make that case.

Director Bailey mentioned that with a number of the processes, District staff did not act with integrity. Public trust was violated.

Director Brim-Edwards stated that as a student in PPS, she went to Washington High which had 800 students. Then they merged it with Monroe, and then closed Washington and Adam schools. One commonality with those schools were that they were low performing schools serving historically underserved students in the District. It will be important for use to look deeper; we have to change the quality of what is happening at the schools or we will not get the outcome or vision we want. She was concerned about the under-enrolled K-8s. What is happening in the classroom is going to be what drive families and keeps them in PPS. School quality is the biggest lever we have and not to just look at boundary changes as the Holy Grail as it was just one lever. Superintendent Guerrero concurred, stating that that was how his team operates; offering the highest quality education that we can. Director Bailey reminded him to not just look at test scores.

Adjourn

Chair Moore adjourned the Work Session at 8:59pm.

Submitted by:

Caren Huson, Board Clerk
PPS Board of Education