



INFORMAL MINUTES

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of topics discussed. Anyone interested in viewing the full meeting, please visit the School Board website at <https://www.pps.net/domain/219>

A Board of Education Retreat came to order at 4:01 pm at the call of Chair Eilidh Lowery. This meeting was held virtually due to Covid-19 and streamed live at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ppscomms/videos>

There were present:

Board Directors

Present: Chair Lowery; Directors Bailey, Brim-Edwards, DePass, Kohnstamm, Moore, Scott;

Absent: Student Representative Shue

Staff and Community Partners

Kara Bradshaw – Executive Assistant, Board of Education

Terry Proctor – Manager, Multimedia Services

Pre-meeting

The virtual meeting opened for attendees to arrive at 3:45pm. No deliberation or decisions were made prior to the start of the meeting.

Board Self-Evaluation

Start Time: 4:01 pm

Chair Lowery shared that the Board's self-evaluation will be centered on their board goals, which are rooted in the district's vision and the graduate portrait. Director Moore shared that self-evaluation is a new process for any Portland Public Schools Board and that the instrument is also new. She provided an overview of the components of effective board behaviors that the Counsel of Great City Schools (CGCS) has found that leads to student improvements.

Director Kohnstamm suggested that the board should first determine how to evaluate themselves, since they do not have a baseline. Director Moore shared the reasons behind choosing the CGCS instrument, noting that it seemed the most reasonable tool to start with. There was discussion about using CGCS instrument.

Break: 4:45 – 4:48 pm

The Board Directors discussed how they scored themselves using the tool. There was discussion regarding the range of scores. It was noted that length of time on the board could have played a role in how each Director scored themselves. There was discussion regarding what indicators should be used to score themselves and whether data should be considered.

The Directors discussed each category in the evaluation tool. It was noted that the Board has adopted a vision as a district and goals as a board but that it would be important to continue to monitor them, as well as possibly refine some of the middle and high school goals. There was discussion regarding guardrails, whether the board had any in place and whether they needed to have any in place. There were requests for more examples of guardrails from the CGCS. Director Moore clarified that the goal of the discussion was to identify things they would like to look at more closely. The Board agreed that they would like to track the amount of time they are spending on each agenda item at board meetings. It was noted that some of the agenda items for the sake of transparency to the public.

Break: 5:42 – 5:44 pm

There was discussion regarding board meeting materials, the impact of receiving materials late, and how much time is spent by staff on preparing materials. There was discussion regarding how many meetings the board had and how to be more efficient during each meeting. It was decided to focus on not echoing / repeating what has already been said during a meeting and to make sure that each Director has the opportunity to speak. Director Moore stated that Communication and Collaboration is an area where further discussion is needed. There was discussion regarding board operating policy and procedures, noting that there currently aren't any policies and procedures. Director Kohnstamm stated that policies and procedures are being worked on and that they will need to be reviewed and discussed as a whole. There was discussion regarding having a formal conflict of interest statement, and it was noted that there a set of ethics that are established by the government, however they are overarching expectations that are finance focused and very broad. There was discussion regarding whether or not the board should give operational advice or not. It was suggested that the board check in with staff to see how much direction they want. Director Moore stated it was a topic that needed further discussion. It was noted that the Board has adopted goals and has participated in governance trainings. There was discussion regarding what it would take to move towards Mastering, including recognizing successes and considering what is the best use of staff time.

Director Lowery provided a review of the topics identified for further discussion, which included refining middle school and high school goals, adding quarterly reports to the goals and creating a monitoring calendar, formalizing guardrails that are already in place, further conversation regarding the consent agenda, creating a conflict of interest statement and an ethics statement, and further conversation regarding correction and advising of staff. Director Bailey added monitoring time, to talk to staff to see if more staff are needed, moving towards a seven day lead time, policy simplification, and recognizing where the board is hitting the mark. Director Moore added to have a conversation regarding what monitoring and accountability function look like, conversation regarding what things need public transparency on a board agenda item, how many meetings a month of all kinds the board is willing to have, ask the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) what including students and community in the student outcome focused governance would it look like, and a rough accounting of staff time in responding to board stuff.

The board discussed whether the exercise was helpful or not, and whether or not to continue with the tool provided. It was agreed that the exercise was helpful, as was the tool. Director Moore asked if there was interest in the having a facilitator, who is trained in the current tool. It was agreed that if the cost was low or free that there was interest in bringing in a facilitator.

Chair Lowery stated that she would send an email with the list of topics identified for future consultation and requested that each Director respond to her directly with one or two items that they would like to focus on. Director Moore requested that any ideas for other board improvement tools be included in the email to Director Lowery.

Adjourn

Chair Lowery adjourned the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by:



Kara Bradshaw, Executive Assistant
PPS Board of Education