

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 625
Saint Paul, Minnesota
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
Administration Building
360 Colborne

March 28, 2006

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:13 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mr. Brodrick, Ms. Street-Stewart, Ms. Carroll, Mr. Conlon, Mr. Goldstein, Ms. Polsfuss, Assistant Clerk

Mr. Oertwig joined the meeting at 8:16 a.m.
Ms. Kong-Thao joined the meeting at 8:25 a.m.

III. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved, seconded by Mr. Brodrick that the agenda be approved as read.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Oertwig	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Ms. Street-Stewart	Yes
Ms. Carroll	Yes
Mr. Conlon	Yes
Mr. Goldstein	Yes

IV. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Street-Stewart indicated the following items would be addressed at this special meeting.

- Report of the Superintendent Search Advisory Committee
- Report of the search consultant, PROACT Search, Inc.
- Interviews with the five candidates for Superintendent
- Other items related to the Superintendent Search Process

1. Report of the Superintendent Search Advisory Committee

Mr. Roger Barr, co-chair of the Superintendent Search Citizens Advisory Committee, presented the summary of the interviews held on March 27 with each of the candidates for Superintendent. He stated 21 members of the committee participated in the interview, that the same four questions were asked of each candidate, committee volunteers had reviewed the comment sheets, highlighting similar questions from the group. Finally, he noted the original comment sheets had been given to the Board Chair if members wished to review the actual written responses.

The Board offered its appreciation for the participation of the Advisory Committee group and asked for Mr. Barr's input on the March 27 process. Mr. Barr indicated the process had gone very well, the interviews by the five groups had come off without a hitch and it was a great day of receiving input from the community. The question was asked if the structure, as set up, allowed people to engage in a meaningful way. Mr. Barr responded the process presented the opportunity to receive opinions from many points of view and provided input to the Board while allowing the Board to work unencumbered. He stated participants felt the

Board valued their perspective and would take their input seriously. He further stated the Committee viewed its role as advisory and the information presented was given in that context and should be used in that manner. A further question was raised as to whether the fact the comment sheets would become public information weighted the responses. Mr. Barr noted the groups had worked with the comment sheet provided by the search consultant and the Advisory Committee worked to deliver information in a clear and articulate manner respectful to the candidates. He noted no comments were made which were not in the fair use category. Mr. Barr thanked the Board for providing the privilege to serve on the Advisory Committee, which stands ready for future work, if necessary.

MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved, seconded by Mr. Brodrick, that the Board receive the report of the Advisory Committee on the Superintendent Search and offer their thanks for the work done and their commitment to the process.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Oertwig	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Ms. Street-Stewart	Yes
Ms. Carroll	Yes
Mr. Conlon	Yes
Mr. Goldstein	Yes

2. Report of the Search Consultant, PROACT Search, Inc.

Dr. Nancy Noeske, president & CEO, PROACT Search, Inc. presented the Board with the summarized material taken from the Public Comment Sheets on each candidate. The comment sheets were completed by the various groups at the Monday morning interviews, by senior staff at the Tuesday morning interviews and by the public at the community forum Monday evening. She stated these were provided to give the Board input from the community on their perceptions of the candidates' strengths and what additional questions they had about the candidates.

MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved acceptance of the PROACT report with thanks, seconded by Mr. Brodrick.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Oertwig	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Ms. Street-Stewart	Yes
Ms. Carroll	Yes
Mr. Conlon	Yes
Ms. Kong-Thao	Yes
Mr. Goldstein	Yes

3. Interviews with the five candidates for Superintendent

The five candidates were interviewed in the following order:

- Kent Pekel
- Bernadeia Johnson
- Judy Elliott
- Bernard Oliver
- Meria Carstarphen

The Board asked the following nine questions of each of the candidates:

- 1) A good leader should work to inspire all of the employees of an organization. What will you do to ensure that rank and file employees of our district feel valued?
- 2) Reform is most often attributed to a superintendent and managed by staff and partners. What is the most authentic role for the school board and how do you build relationship and/or consensus with the board members? [SPPS has 7 elected board members with various backgrounds and interests reflecting the entire community]

- 3) St. Paul has developed a strong school improvement strategy called The Project for Academic Excellence. The board believes that the next step in school improvement is building the community partnerships to enhance the school improvement efforts. Share with us your experience in building school - community partnerships and then give us a specific example that indicates how the achievement gap was reduced as a result of your efforts.
- 4) How will you balance competing interests and influences of board, superintendent, building staff, students and families, and outside stakeholders.
- 5) For 5 years St. Paul has had over 50% of the students entering the St. Paul Schools at kindergarten qualifying for ELL services. Help us understand your philosophy in serving such a student population
- 6) Reducing the achievement gap between African-American and low-income students and others has remained deeply problematic for our district. Please specifically explain your efforts to reduce this gap, and what success have you had?
- 7) Give us an example of a time you made a professional mistake or miscalculation. What was the error, how was it handled, and what would you have done differently? What did you learn from the experience?
- 8) The SPPS mission is premier education for all. How will you maintain that commitment in an era of increasing regulations, declining budgets and enrollments that have led to increased class size and programming cuts?
- 9) What is your most significant accomplishment as an educator, and how have you used that experience in your personal and professional life?

Ms. Street-Stewart presented questions 1 & 9; Ms. Kong-Thao questions 2 & 8, Mr. Conlon #3, Mr. Brodrick #4, Ms. Carroll #5, Mr. Oertwig #6 and Mr. Goldstein #7.

MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved, seconded by Mr. Goldstein that the meeting recess to continue following dinner (approximately 8:00 p.m.).

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Oertwig	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Ms. Street-Stewart	Yes
Ms. Carroll	Yes
Mr. Conlon	Yes
Ms. Kong-Thao	Yes
Mr. Goldstein	Yes

The meeting recessed at 1:25 p.m.

Meeting reconvened at 8:15 p.m.

4. Continuation of the Superintendent Search Process

MOTION: Mr. Conlon moved that the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education nominate candidate A for the position of Superintendent of Saint Paul Public Schools. Seconded by Ms. Carroll.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Oertwig	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Ms. Street-Stewart	Yes
Ms. Carroll	Yes
Mr. Conlon	Yes
Ms. Kong-Thao	Yes
Mr. Goldstein	Yes

Ms. Street-Stewart stated the Board was pleased to announce the selection of Dr. Meria Carstarphen as the new Superintendent for Saint Paul Public Schools.

The Board offered various observations relative to the candidate and the process.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved the meeting adjourn, second by Ms. Kong-Thao.

The motion was approved with the following roll call vote:

Mr. Oertwig	Yes
Mr. Brodrick	Yes
Ms. Street-Stewart	Yes
Ms. Carroll	Yes
Mr. Conlon	Yes
Ms. Kong-Thao	Yes
Mr. Goldstein	Yes

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

For clarity and to facilitate research, these minutes reflect the order of the Agenda and not necessarily the time during the meeting the items were discussed.

Prepared and submitted by
Marilyn Polsfuss
Assistant Clerk, Board of Education