

**MEETING MINUTES
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD
March 25, 2008**

PRESENT: Board of Education: Elona Street-Stewart, Kazoua Kong-Thao, Keith Hardy, Tom Conlon, John Brodrick, Tom Goldstein, Anne Carroll

Staff: Superintendent Carstarphen, Suzanne Kelly, Lois Rockney, Christine Wroblewski, Yusef Mgeni, Valeria Silva, Joe Raasch, Hitesh Haria, Brett Johnson, Nancy Stachel, Jeremiah Ellis, Dan Rodriguez, Stacey Akyea, Patrick Romey, Howie Padilla. Kris Emerson

Other: Fred Haeusler, Al Oertwig, Tonicia Abdur Salaam, Kevin Huepenbecker, Phillip Kapler, David Peterson, Alvaro Patino, Jim Walsh, Doug Belden, Charrie Willis, Bill Rosenbloom, Kevin Driscoll, Amanda M. Tyson, Tom Eckstein, Liz Wynne, Jennifer Plum

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4.36 p.m.

II. AGENDA

The agenda for the evening included the following subjects:

- Charter School Review (Twin Cities Academy Middle School, Twin Cities Academy High School and Face to Face Academy)
- Homecroft
- Mass Notification System
- CBFAC Update
- Rule of 90
- Policy Review
- Work Session on Committees Advisory to the Board

MOTION: Mr. Goldstein moved to revise the agenda by moving the Mass Notification subject to precede the Homecroft discussion. Motion seconded by Ms. Carroll.

Motion passed.

1. Charter School Review

Administration indicated they were seeking board approval for the renewal of the sponsorship contracts with Twin Cities Academy Middle School and High School and Face to Face Academy Charter Schools. The renewal would commence July 1, 2008 for three additional years.

Administration stated the audit for each school is an in-depth process and the renewal of sponsorship is based on meeting several criteria: fulfillment of the Charters' Mission Statement; fulfillment of the terms and conditions of the existing sponsorship contracts; timely submission of the required reports and data; continued board governance and administrative leadership at the schools; the academic programs of the three schools demonstrate continued success and/or improvement; the schools are using their human and financial resources appropriately and the recommendations from the SPPS Charter School Liaison, the three School Quality Review teams that audited the schools and the staff of the Office of Accountability/School and Program Audit Office.

- **Face to Face Academy**

A brief history of the school was presented. This was followed by an in-depth question and answer session exploring various questions and concerns the Board had relative to the report. One of the major issues addressed was the review team's concerns in the areas of governance and finance; specifically the school's efforts to assert the independence of the Academy board from the Health and Counseling board, as well as the terms and execution of the management contract between the two. Additional areas of discussion included: nutrition services for the school, library resources, AYP and alignment of curriculum to state standards.

MOTION: Ms. Carroll moved that the Committee of the Board recommends that the Board of the Education approve the renewal of the sponsorship contract with Face to Face Academy. Ms. Kong-Thao seconded the motion.

Motion passed.

- **Twin Cities Academy School and Twin Cities Academy High School**

There was again a question and answer session in which Board questions and concerns were addressed. Areas of discussion included: the "pending" of the contract for the high school, the development of written accounting practices and procedures; outreach and diversity issues and how the school's lottery process for enrollment works.

In a broader focus, answers were made to questions from the Board about the on-going monitoring of charter schools in order to ensure that issues of concern were being addressed in a complete and timely manner.

MOTION: Ms. Kong-Thao moved the Committee of the Board recommends that the Board of the Education approve the sponsorship contract with Twin Cities Academy Charter School and Twin Cities Academy Charter High School. Mr. Hardy seconded the motion.

Motion passed.

The Board thanked staff for the very complete and detailed information provided to them.

2. Mass Notification System

The Chief Business Officer stated administration is seeking Board approval on their recommendation for a new mass notification system which would replace the four systems currently existing and in use by the district. Approval is necessary at this time so that staff can move forward on the contract and have the system can be in place and possibly in testing phase by the end of this school year.

The presentation addressed how the new system would address district needs, system ownership within the district, a price comparison between the two finalists who were considered and the savings to the district by going to one system instead of four separate systems (both in efficiency and cost) and a comparison of the "value-added" aspects of each system.

Administration recommended the district go with the system offered through Connect Ed, despite the slightly high cost. The services received for this additional cost are critical to the successful implementation and full use of the system. These services included on site training as needed, written protocols and procedures which can be tailored to the district, services from a national public relations firm included with the contract and the system's strong monitoring and reporting capabilities. Clarification was made that this was not an in-house system but was a contracted service provided by an outside vendor.

MOTION: Mr. Goldstein moved, seconded by Ms. Carroll, that the Committee of the Board recommends that the Board of Education authorize the Superintendent to enter into a contract with Connect Ed for a mass notification system at a cost of \$109,500. This item has been budgeted for and will be paid from the Operations area in budget code 01-005-810-000-6320-0000.

Motion passed.

The Board requested they be provided with information on how persons with no phone or computer would be notified about items for which this service is utilized.

3. Homecroft

The Deputy Chief Academic Officer spoke to the 2008-09 Homecroft program change and administration's proposal for the school. She reviewed the factors which necessitated the program changes for the various schools and elaborated on the issue of declining enrollment and how that was related directly to the budget deficit the district is facing.

She then reviewed the Board actions from the December 18 Board meeting relative to Homecroft: attendance boundaries for Homecroft Elementary were eliminated; new attendance areas were established for Horace Mann and Groveland Elementary with the bilingual students assigned to Wellstone Elementary. A summary of subsequent school selections made by the Homecroft families was provided as additional information for the Board.

Reasons why a change is necessary for Homecroft were restated: declining enrollment at the school led to a loss of comprehensive programming and an erosion of quality for the students; a surplus of elementary classroom space in Highland Park and the fact that "shuffling" students does not deal with the declining enrollment and finally, the fact that the school was in corrective action.

A resume of the Homecroft Advisory Team meetings was provided along with a summary of the recommendations brought forward from their work and that of staff.

The Deputy Chief Academic Officer then reviewed the factors which were used in evaluating each of the nine proposed programs. These were: the potential for new enrollment to SPPS; potential funding sources; operational expenses for the building; staffing expenses for the program; program specific expenses; transportation costs; the impact on other SPPS schools; the impact on students and families for proposals that affect existing programs and the overall district needs for space utilization. She then reviewed both an elementary example and a secondary example of summarized costs to start up a program and the bottom line cost to the district. A cost summary comparison for the administration recommendation for the school was also provided. This summary, though still a negative figure at start-up, provided the greatest overall cost savings for the district.

She then moved on to a review of the administrative proposal that the Homecroft facility house an Early Learning Center and Special Services. This space utilization addresses district needs for improved facilities for special education; a best practices site for early childhood learning and an overall reduction in leased space (a Board directive). For the community it provides for additional space for early childhood programming for families. The proposal is a shared space design for the district's first "Early Learning Center" which will consolidate 4-year programs, provide a best practice model ECFE and ECSE collaboration site, house staff for birth through age five programs, house a professional development center and professional resource library for birth through age five programs. Additionally, it would be the academic setting for the Rivereast Day Treatment program which serves students in grades 4-10 and the location for The Lab, where junior and senior high students work on academic goals through poetry, arts, dance, music and wellness. There is some unused space within the building which offers potential for additional programming to evolve over time.

At this point, the Homecroft Advisory Team representatives were asked why they felt Homecroft had not succeeded as a neighborhood school. The response was it had not provided a vibrant, exciting program which the community could buy into.

The report being completed the Chair called for discussion or questions. Discussion included:

- Clarification that the early childhood piece was an expansion of the offering, not a consolidation of existing programming from various sites into one space.
- Discussion on the number of students who might be served at the site
- Costs for retrofitting the building and what that might include
- A discussion on the need to be flexible within the district in viewing programming and space use issues for the greater benefit of the district and its students
- A commitment to do data collection on demographic developments in order to work toward a bigger district plan
- Discussion on the status of the “rec center” which was housed at Homecroft and the associated outdoor space. Administration is to clarify the issue of ownership on the outdoor spaces associated with Homecroft.
- Administration was instructed to engage the broader community regarding access/use of the “community space”
- Clarification that the Legal Department has reviewed proposed numbers for Homecroft in order to be sure the District meets all requirements to avoid triggering the school closing statute in Minnesota law.
- The Board requested that as programming specifics develop that the information be made available in an easily accessible format for the community.
- Discussion was held with regard to the MELF scholarship funds and potential impacts for the district

Administration explained the motion they were proposing indicating it had been reviewed by Legal to be certain it addressed all necessary points. The action on the change in grade level reconfiguration at Homecroft is necessary to define the changes as specified by law and to set in motion action on the various leases involved with the programming changes.

MOTION: Mr. Goldstein moved, seconded by Ms. Carroll, that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of Education receive administration’s recommendation to adopt the proposed programmatic change pursuant to Minnesota Statute 123B.02, Subd 2 (General Powers of Independent School Districts Facilities for school-age children) establishing grade-level configuration for Homecroft Elementary School as follows:

- Create a shared space design that launches the District’s first “Early Learning Center” by consolidating 4-year programs and providing a best practices model ECFE and ECSE collaboration site (three sections of early childhood classes focused on children and parents learning together) as well as birth through age 5 program staff; and housing a professional development center that includes a professional resources library for birth through age 5 programming.
- House the Rivereast Day Treatment Program (to serve students in grades 4 through 10), and
- House The Lab, where junior and senior high students work on academic goals through poetry, arts, dance, music and wellness.

MOTION: Mr. Conlon moved, seconded by Mr. Hardy, to amend the motion by adding the statement that the District make efforts to grow into an elementary program and that administration reassess Homecroft programming on an annual basis to determine the feasibility of such programming.

Following extensive discussion with various Board members stating why they would or would not support the original motion and/or the amendment, Mr. Conlon revised his motion to amend to state:

MOTION: Mr. Conlon moved to amend the motion by adding the statement that the District make efforts to grow into an elementary program at the site.
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Mr. Hardy concurred with the change as the seconder to the original motion to amend. The motion failed on a vote of 2 Yes (Hardy and Conlon), 5 No.

MOTION: Mr. Conlon then moved that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of Education instruct administration to reassess Homecroft programming on an annual basis to determine the feasibility of future elementary programming at the site. Mr. Hardy seconded the motion.

Following further discussion on why this should or should not be acted upon and parliamentary clarification that there could not be two motions on the floor,

Ms. Kong-Thao called the question for the original motion. Mr. Brodrick seconded.

Motion passed.

A point of order was asked for and Mr. Conlon requested the Homecroft Advisory Team be allowed to make a brief statement following action on the motions.

RESTATEMENT OF ORIGINAL MOTION:

Mr. Goldstein moved, seconded by Ms. Carroll, that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of Education receive administration's recommendation to adopt the proposed programmatic change pursuant to Minnesota Statute 123B.02, Subd 2 (General Powers of Independent School Districts Facilities for school-age children) establishing grade-level configuration for Homecroft Elementary School as follows:

- **Create a shared space design that launches the District's first "Early Learning Center" by consolidating 4-year programs and providing a best practices model ECFE and ECSE collaboration site (three sections of early childhood classes focused on children and parents learning together) as well as birth through age 5 program staff; and housing a professional development center that includes a professional resources library for birth through age 5 programming.**
- **House the Rivereast Day Treatment Program (to serve students in grades 4 through 10), and**
- **House The Lab, where junior and senior high students work on academic goals through poetry, arts, dance, music and wellness.**

Motion passed with six in favor and Mr. Brodrick abstaining.

RESTATEMENT OF CONLON MOTION:

Mr. Conlon then moved that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of Education instruct administration to reassess Homecroft programming on an annual basis to determine the feasibility of future elementary programming at the site. Mr. Hardy seconded the motion.

Motion failed with 2 in favor (Conlon and Hardy) and 5 opposed.

A Homecroft Advisory Committee representative read a statement from the committee regarding their view of the process. The Board thanked all involved for the thoughtful process given to a decision for the Homecroft site.

4. Citizens Budget and Finance Advisory Committee (CBFAC) Update (Time Certain 6:30 p.m.)
The Chief Business Officer introduced the members of CBFAC present at the meeting: Tonicia Abdul Salaam, Kevin Huepenbecker, David Peterson and Alvaro Patino. She indicated they were currently working on the topic of best practices as it relates to Business and Financial Affairs including a customer satisfaction survey.

She stated CBFAC was coming to the Board at this meeting to propose a subject for the next year's study topic. They were coming forward at this time because the committee felt it was important to establish the subject for study early so that work on selection of committee members

for the following year could commence and work on its subject could start immediately upon formation of the next committee by the Board in September. The topic being proposed for 2008-2009 is enrollment trends for 2008-2009 and their impact on budget recommendations. This subject ties in with the strategic plan, keeping kids in school and with academic achievement.

The topic recurs frequently in discussions and it is felt it is important to know where students go when they leave SPPS and the reasons why they leave. The committee proposes coming forward with recommendations to better track students as they leave the district and things which might be done to retain students and families (controllable and uncontrollable factors). Additionally, it would be of interest to know why students come into the district as well. Other things which might be learned would include such things as whether certain schools/programs better retain students or have greater loses which would be beneficial in providing additional input on what is working in the district; the impact of charter schools, home study, etc. Administration indicated that currently the information on why students come to or leave the district is held at the school level and the committee might be able to provide input on how to dovetail that data into district-wide capacity to track these details. The committee might also look outside the district to see if there are practices or trends which might be useful to incorporate into district practices.

The Superintendent indicated ideally there would be a global charge to both CBFAC and CEAC so that they would pursue their investigations and then come together to tie student enrollment, demographics and facilities into a big picture on what trends might affect the district over time. The facilities condition assessment study is currently being done by Operations and may provide information useful to both CEAC and CBFAC.

The Board asked to be kept abreast of the data CBFAC is looking at so their understanding of what is happening evolves with the process. Administration indicated this could be provided in the weekly update as information becomes available.

The committee representatives requested that the charge from the Board is very clear as to what its expectations are and that the Board move quickly to begin the process of finding candidates for the next CBFAC study group so it can start working on its charge immediately in September. It was felt specific emphasis should be placed on expertise and interest in the area being studied and this should be highlighted in the application form which should include the charge to the committee. Additionally the committee felt it was important that the Board or administration come together with the committee to assist in defining the research questions which will drive the methodology and data gathered and define how it will interact with CEAC. The committee also felt it was important that data collection start as soon as possible so the committee can "hit the ground running".

The Board indicated it felt is was important the CBFAC be provided with the option of more regular updates to the Board as it moves through its next area of study in order to keep the Board updated on progress as well as providing the opportunity to refine the direction of the study.

MOTION: Mr. Conlon moved that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of Education accept the recommendation that the 2008-2009 CBFAC topic be enrollment trends, their impact on budget and recommendations. Ms. Carroll seconded the motion.

Motion passed.

5. Rule of 90

The Chief Business Officer stated EdMN had introduced a bill this legislative session which would reestablish the rule of 90 for those teachers hired after January 1, 1989. The Rule of 90 allows for early retirement without penalty if the combined age and years of service for a participant equal 90. A separate bill has been introduced for St. Paul teachers who have a separate retirement fund. The bills have a fiscal note attached to them which means there is a cost

attached to the legislation. With the state budget situation as it is, unless legislation is revenue neutral, it is less likely to pass.

It has been estimated that the current cost of this benefit would be 1.6%[^] of payroll or \$3 million annually. Assuming that cost is shared equally between the teachers and the district, expenditures for 2008-09 would have to be increased by \$1.5 million.

The legislative platform of the district is very clear that if additional revenue is provided for education, it should first go to an increase in the general education formula and then to special education funding. If there is a choice between funding general education or special education and a pension bill, the focus of the district should be the already adopted platform that sends revenue to the classroom.

Phillip Kapler, Executive Director of the Saint Paul Teachers Retirement Fund Association (SPTRFA) provided additional information for the Board on the Rule of 90 and its possible impact to the District.

The Board asked to be kept apprised of the situation so that they could take action as needed.

Director Brodrick noted he would be asking that the SPTRFA be placed on a future COB agenda for the purpose of update.

MOTION: Ms. Kong-Thao moved, seconded by Ms. Carroll, that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of Education receive the report on the Rule of 90.

Motion passed.

6. Policy

The Board reviewed the following policies:

NEW POLICY NO.	POLICY TITLE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
211.01	Committees & Councils Advisory to the Board	Approved as revised
413.00	Drug-Free Workplace	Approved with clarification as noted to Item 3, page 2
413.01	Chemical Use & Abuse	Approved
499.00	Policies Incorporated by Reference	Approved ((pending Legal Review)
504.00	Drug-Free Schools	Approved
601.01	Achievement	Approved

MOTION: Ms. Kong-Thao moved, seconded by Ms. Carroll, that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of Education approve the policies reviewed, as noted, pending final adoption.

Motion passed.

7. Work Session - Committees Advisory to the Board

The Board reviewed Policy 211.01 – Committees/Councils Advisory to the Board. The decision was made to change the title for the policy to Appointed Committees/Councils Advisory to the Board as the content of the policy applies to the committees other than those mandated under law.

Clarification was sought on how members to CBFAC and CEAC are solicited. Administration was instructed that the applications be revised to clearly state the charge for the committee and the requirements/expertise required for the area of study.

Discussion covered which committees were mandated under law and which were established by the Board, staff or through affinity groups and how advocacy groups were established/formed.

III. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:	Ms. Carroll moved the meeting adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hardy.
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Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Polsfuss
Secretary to the Board

HEMLOCK MOTION TO AMEND ORIGINAL MOTION FROM ADMIN.

Anne **opposed calls out particular program and not been done for any other program.**

John abstain on original motion, opposed amendment.

Tom G No want to create realistic mandates.

Keith – make clear to public that

Amendment vote: Amend failed