

**COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 8, 2006**

PRESENT: **BOARD OF EDUCATION:** Ms. Kong-Thao, Chair; Mr. Brodrick, Ms. Carroll, Mr. Conlon, Mr. Goldstein, Ms. Street-Stewart

STAFF: Superintendent Carstarphen, Deb Henton, Heidi Bernal, Denise Quinlan, Hitesh Haria, Christine Wroblewski, Willie Nesbit, Louis Scott, Peter Christensen, Valeria Silva, Nancy Meyer, David Peterson, George Simon, Jaber Alsiddiqui, Jeremiah Ellis, Pablo Matamoros

OTHERS: Doug Bell, Tonicia Abdul Salaam, Raji Fid, Kathleen Kelley, Joe Reid, M.M. Giles, Ernesto de la Torre, Brenda C. Moreno, Doug Beldon, Alvaro Patino

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Ms. Kong-Thao, Committee Chair.

II. AGENDA

Ms. Kong-Thao introduced the items on the agenda for this meeting, which were:

- Quarterly Financial Report
- Report From the Latino Consent Decree Parent Advisory Committee
- Presentation of 2007-2008 SPPS Budget

1. Quarterly Financial Report

Superintendent Carstarphen introduced Lois Rockney, Chief Business Officer, who presented the quarterly financial report for the quarter ending March 31, 2007.

Ms. Rockney discussed the report which had been provided to board members in the weekly update. She stated the financial picture is good for all funds at this point in time as the district approaches the end of the year. Projected expenditures did not materialize in some areas that resulted in \$12.1 million less than what had been projected in the adopted budget.

Ms. Rockney highlighted financial information in the General Fund that includes

- Reserved Fund Balance
- Designated Fund Balance,
- General Fund Fully Financed
- Food Service Fund
- Community Services Fund
- Community Service Fully Financed Fund
- Construction Fund
- Debt Service Fund.

Ms. Rockney commented the district's fund balance is anticipated to remain stable at \$5.6 million after expenditures.

The following motion was made:

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Conlon and seconded by Ms. Carroll that the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education accept the Quarterly Financial Report.

Motion Passed.

2. Report from the Latino Consent Decree (LCD) Parent Advisory Committee

Committee Chair Kong-Thao provided background information on the relationship between committees and the Board. Opportunities to report to the Board are provided to committees that have mandatory reporting requirements. This provides an opportunity for Board members to engage them in dialogue and to provide an understanding of what the responsibility of the Board is and learn from the committees where they are in the work they are doing.

Superintendent Carstarphen introduced the Chair and Co-Chair of the LCD Parent Advisory Committee Ernesto de la Torre and Brenda Moreno, who presented the LCD Committee's Annual Report.

The goal of the report was to document the feedback and recommendations Latino parents from across Saint Paul Public Schools have shared with district personnel via Parent Advisory Committees (PAC) meetings, surveys and evaluations. The report also presented data concerning the Latino students and Latino Consent Decree programs.

Mr. de la Torre stated from the information received from parents and surveys the following areas were of greatest concern:

- School safety and security
- Low cost books
- Continued recruiting of bi-lingual educational assistants in more schools to provide help for students
- The 4-year-old programs

Discussion followed. Ms. Street-Stewart and Ms. Carroll discussed the possibility of the Latino community joining other communities of color to talk about the shared concerns; in particular, school safety and security.

Superintendent Carstarphen commented on the summary of strengths and concerns outlined in the Report (pages 10 and 11) She remarked the areas of strengths are at the school-based level and the areas of concern reflect Administrative level responsibility.

Superintendent Carstarphen stated in the Administrative Response she would give the Committee and the Board direction to help elevate the conversation regarding policy revisions this year by providing guidance on how the parents could enrich and inform the District's policy review process. By addressing current policy or changing District procedures on certain issues staff can be pushed into a deeper discussion at the leadership level, about what needs to change in how the district looks at this work of serving families and children; in particular, students who graduate from high school but cannot get access into college. \

Heidi Bernal, Interim ELL Director, continued the discussion and reported on meeting with the legislature to discuss the discipline policy they would deal with the areas of safety concerns. She indicated it would be beneficial to have the Rights and Responsibilities Handbook available in their language. She felt parts of these areas are administrative and are done everyday and parts could be addressed in a broader Board policy. Getting parents involved in some of these areas would give them the opportunity to have some input. Ms. Bernal commented that Jeff Lalla, General Counsel, would be invited to explain to the LCD Committee the difference between administrative recommendations and looking at kinds of things their committee could do regarding changing policies of the district.

Superintendent Carstarphen remarked that staff would separate what was administrative and what would be helpful in receiving feedback on from the Committee in order to make adjustments in policy over the next six months.

Mr. de la Torre and Ms. Moreno thanked Pablo Matamoros for his much needed guidance and help and the ELL Department for their assistance.

Superintendent Carstarphen addressed Board and committee members stating “your children are our children” and indicating the District really wants to work with them to make things better for all children.” (This was conveyed in Spanish.)

Ms. Street-Stewart remarked on the interest in establishing family resource centers at the schools and supported the idea of expanding them because that is an area where other parents can share their interest. After further discussion the following motion was made:

MOTION: It was moved by Mr. Conlon and seconded by Ms. Street-Stewart that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of Education accept the Report from the Latino Consent Decree (LCD) Parent Advisory Committee.

Motion Passed.

3. Presentation of 2007-2008 SPPS Budget

Ms. Rockney presented the 2007-2008 Saint Paul Public School’s budget and announced the following dates:

- May 15 -- 8:15 p.m. – Public hearing on 2007-08 SPPS budget at the District Administration Building, 360 Colborn. She stated interpreters would be provided for Hmong, Spanish and Somali families.
- May 29 - School Board budget discussion
- June 19 – Budget adopted by Board

Ms. Rockney provided a Power Point presentation of the 2007-08 SPPS Proposed Budget (Non General Fund and General Fund). The presentation included:

- The Big Picture – All Funds and their use, breaking it down into:
 - Non General Funds
 - General Fund – Overview and the dilemma
 - Referendum Impact and dilemma
 - Deficit - Breaking it down
 - Solution – Options
- Next Steps – The Timeline

Ms. Rockney provided handouts of the Power Point presentation and the 2007-2008 Proposed Budget document to Committee members for review and discussion.

Board members and the Citizens Budget and Finance Advisory Committee (CBFAC) discussed the proposed budget. There was extensive discussion regarding the elimination of the Excel Program and the one time only funding of \$750,000 to continue the Excel teachers for one more year to give the Office of Academics time to work with principals to redesign the program. Valeria Silva, Chief Academic Officer, explained the alternative plan to replace the Excel Program that would better serve students who lack credits to move into the next grade.

Other areas of interest or concern included the reorganization of the Special Education PAS Program and the Johnson Parkway move.

The question “why are so many families and students leaving the district” was posed. Superintendent Carstarphen talked about survey data, charter schools and demographics that could influence why people leave the district. She remarked that an Inclusiveness Survey had been developed this month for staff input which would hopefully provide feedback to help the District meet it’s responsibility to make it a better place and encourage staff, students and families stay in the District.

Committee Chair Kong-Thoa thanked Ms. Rockney and administration for their patience and for the excellent presentation. Information regarding the Public Hearing on May 15 went out

via flyers, telephone calls to families, through the Superintendent's Bulletin, etc. in anticipation of a big community turn-out.

III. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. by Committee Chair Kong-Thao.

Respectfully submitted by
Diana J. Sanders
Recorder
Saint Paul Board of Education