

**MEETING MINUTES  
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD MEETING  
JUNE 24, 2008**

**PRESENT:** Board of Education: John Brodrick, Anne Carroll, Elona Street-Stewart, Tom Conlon, Tom Goldstein, Kazoua Kong-Thao, Keith Hardy joined the meeting at 4:45.

Staff: Lois Rockney, Suzanne Kelly, Valeria Silva, Kate Wilcox-Harris, Christine Wroblewski, Tamiko Castile, Linda Sparling

Other: Doug Beldin, Jeanette Gudgel, Alvaro Patino

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by the Committee Chair at 4:41 p.m.

**II. AGENDA**

1. Citizens' Budget and Finance Advisory Committee (CBFAC Presentation and Administrative Response\*

Chief Business Officer introduced the report indicating the CBFAC Vice Chair, Alvaro Patino, would be making the presentation to the Board.

The 2007-08 charge to CBFAC was to:

- Review the financial practices and procedures of the SPPS Business Office and compare them to the best practices in the industry
- Survey schools to determine customer satisfaction
- Recommend changes that improve or increase the support to schools and programs and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations.

The committee realized early in the process they would not have sufficient time to address all three areas of the charge adequately and decided that a survey of the schools to determine customer satisfaction would be the one area they would focus on.

In structuring the survey four key areas were decided upon as crucial to the efficient/effective running of the department: communication, responsiveness, accuracy and reliability. A survey instrument was developed and disseminated to 2400 employees (none of whom were from the Business Office). 28.3% completed the survey (706 responses). Site Council co-chairs were also included within the survey sample. Mr. Patino then reviewed the responses to the survey questions relative to the various departments within the Business Office.

Recommendations brought forward by CBFAC as a result of the survey are:

- The survey should be an annual event,
- The survey should be conducted each year in February.
- The results from this first survey should be the benchmark for future surveys
- HR should be added to the survey next year
- The payroll survey should be separate
- Customer service training should be a priority
- Consider incentives to increase participation

CBFAC also offered several recommendations that are not related to this year's charge. The committee felt it was important to relay this information to the Board, to ensure the sustainability of CBFAC.

- Assign CBFAC members and assign the charge to the committee earlier in the year.
- Consider a stipend or other incentive for membership on CBFAC
- Considering the charge for next year, to analyze demographics, consider a budget for CBFAC and CEAC combined efforts in order for them to access outside resources if needed.

Additional recommendations for future charges should be:

- It should be reasonable given the timeframe and resources available
- It should be an effective use of members' time, resources and energy
- It should include specific, realistic and attainable goals.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE TO CBFAC REPORT:**

The Chief Business Officer offered her thanks to the members of CBFAC for their work this year and to the Business Office Management Team who provided support to the committee during their work.

Administration responded to the six recommendations brought forward by CBFAC as follows:

- Administration agreed that the Customer Satisfaction Survey should be an annual undertaking.
- It also agreed that the February timeframe is a much better time to give the survey.
- Administration is committed to getting the survey out to other venues beyond immediate staff
- The administration agreed that the data compiled should be used as a benchmark for measuring growth.
- Preliminary discussions about adding HR to the survey for the 2008-09 fiscal year have been held
- A separate survey including payroll and HR will be conducted
- Administration agreed that customer service training needs to be a priority for the Business Office during the 2008-09 fiscal year.
- Administration understands the recommendation to provide incentives to complete the survey, however, in tight budget times this becomes more difficult to justify. That said the Management Team is exploring low cost or no cost incentives for the 2008-09 survey process.

It was noted the Board is scheduled to consider CBFAC and CEAC appointments in August and September.

Board discussion areas included:

- Eligibility of current committee members to continue to serve
- Would CBFAC also be able to look at the budget in addition to their charge in the next year
- Membership on committees, pros and cons of tenure, expertise in the area of the charge
- Expansion of survey tools be sure participants understand timelines and format,
- Will administration provide feedback to CBFAC as their recommendations are being implemented? Perhaps an end of year report at the beginning of the new year.
- Who was included in the 40% sub-group in the survey, was it random
- Questions regarding the CBFAC request for a budget for joint CBFAC and CEAC analysis (changes in enrollment over next years and impact on budget and facilities)
- Separation of Payroll and HR from general survey; include information to staff as clarification on the department's relationship to the Business Office. Survey indirect relation with Business Office (i.e., Site Councils).

- Request to have the CBFAC report put on the website with analysis and Administrative Response
- The issue of effective use of CBFAC time, energy and the issue of “busy work”; the point regarding the timeframe being short for completion of the work was again noted.
- Provide a venue for CBFAC feedback on charge to bring out concerns before they start their work
- Suggestion that the Board do an evaluation of the committee in order to get feedback on the process and if they felt the work was worthwhile. This would be helpful to the Board in appointing future committees.
- Are there tools available that can be given to committees regarding process within committee in order to provide a baseline/structure for their work
- Review policies and procedures of committee in order to improve work within the committee, rules and procedures defined in order to direct work of the committee and within which they must operate. (Universal components for all committees). Provide clarity to members about obligation to Board and the work.
- The purpose of committees was defined as: Their role is to advise the Board. The Board must define what it wants advice on and structure the charge in such a way as to allow the committee to work and find the work beneficial and rewarding.
- A two-tiered structure was suggested for CBFAC, a core group of experienced CBFAC members and then bringing in topic specific expertise for specific projects.

**MOTION: Mr. Brodrick moved that the Committee of the Board recommend the Board of Education accept the CBFAC Report and the Administrative Response, with thanks for the work done. Motion seconded by Ms. Carroll.**

**Motion passed.**

2. Board of Education Academic Recognitions Criteria

The Chief Academic Officer indicated questions were raised this year by the Board and schools as to how students are selected to participate. A brief history of the award process was given and recommendations which might be adopted to broaden participation were offered.

She then presented a brief history of the Board of Education Awards. The program started in 1993 and was designed to acknowledge the superior academic or artistic accomplishments of a student. Recipients are required to place first or second in a school sanctioned or approved national, state or regional competition. The majority of recipients have been in grades 7-12.

The subject areas of various awards were noted and in the handout materials specific competitions were listed for each area.

- Performing Arts
- World Languages
- Social Studies
- Math
- Science and Technology
- Writing and Speaking
- Community Service
- Problem Solving.

She then described how the District was able to increase the percentage of award recipients from 2007 to 2008 through increased accountability from the Office of Academics including the direct support of the Executive Director for Professional Development and support from the District Gifted Services staff. There was a 20% increase in the awards awarded, a 15% increase of unduplicated students receiving awards and a 4% increase in schools participating.

Current BOE award criteria are:

- Students who have entered national, state and regional academic or arts competitions
- Who have placed first or second in those competitions. (In 2006 Gifted Services clarified this criterion through extensive research to provide schools with guidance on competitions that did not use traditional place rankings.)
- In competitions where no clear first or second place finishers were designated, all students performing at the highest tier were eligible for recognition.

Recommended changes to the criteria, based on feedback from administrators and programs, include:

- Limit regional winners to first or second place rankings or their equivalent
- Recognize first, second or third place rankings or their equivalent for state competitions
- Recognize top ten place rankings or their equivalent for national competitions
- Recognize top tier recipients as designated by competition sponsors absent place rankings
- Ensure that “superior” performance involves more than mere participation while recognizing that some activities are non-competitive by nature
- Recognize Community Service accomplishments published in the news media or deemed worthy of notice by community groups and service organizations
- Award kids who are part of a team and won – team recognition (meet same criteria as individuals but as a team)

Participation can be increased through:

- Schools (principals) soliciting participation in at least two academic competitions
- Schools (principals) including at least two competitions in their annual SCIP
- Revisiting criteria next year to ensure all students who have achieved academic, artistic or community service excellence are recognized
- Look for ways to increase the number of recipients through increased communication between building principals and Gifted Services.

Discussion included:

- Recognition of the spring sports participants (recognized by the receipt of a certificate mailed to their home).
- Rotating recognition ceremonies among some schools
- A booklet with all award recipients included as recognition was suggested.
- Keep academics separate from athletics for recognition purposes
- Provide clarification for schools on the relationship between competing and what they are held accountable for.
- Why the limited participation among schools (events outside of school day, so there may be restrictions to access or support)
- Due to heavy spring schedule, scheduling recognitions and being respectful of student and family time can be difficult
- The Board indicated it is ready for a broader discussion on how recognize students. A starting point would be looking at all events, how recognition is done and how it relates to achievement. It was requested that this be put on the agenda for a future COB meeting.
- There was concern about not getting the academic connection relative to athletics.
- Student recognitions – current, not yet existing and where and how to implement fuller recognition of student achievements
- Community engagement – recognizing kids, respecting community as a whole, engaging communities at the schools
- Add to recommendation, Board recognition of students (academic)
- How athletes are doing in classroom as part of presentation by coaches during athletic recognitions
- Explanation of why third place recipients were not included in awards – historically large numbers receive 3<sup>rd</sup> and it no longer seemed special

- Standards need to be set for the District to identify performance in receipt of awards
- Athletic directors tweak fall and winter events to emphasize value of athletics toward academic achievement (standard format for presentation)
- Student recognition subset around athletics and accountability in athletics

**MOTION:** Ms. Carroll moved that the Committee of the Board recommend that the Board of education approve the recommendations for 08-09 as presented, with the understanding that the item regarding team winners will be further refined. For 08-09 Administration will work on facility location and scheduling issues to equitably recognize and accommodate all students who merit recognition. For 09-10, Administration will actively explore the larger issues around student recognition, including legitimate criteria for excellence, fair access, clear expectations, accountability on all fronts and alignment with the Strategic Plan. Motion seconded by Mr. Conlon.

**Motion passed.**

### 3. Work Session

- **COB Meeting Date Changes**

Two COB dates were rescheduled: July 29 was cancelled, rescheduled to August 5 and August 26 was cancelled, rescheduled to **Thursday**, September 4.

- **Board Development**

The chair indicated that the work for this session would involve identification of a set of topic areas which interest the Board and in which the Board desires development. Discussion around specifics provided clarification as to what was being looked for relative to these topics.

Topics suggested which could be addressed at **in-service sessions** were:

- Electronic communication (public, board, staff, media)
- Emerging issues
- Federal education policy changes and a Board process for new policy
- Culture/Racism (diversity, white privilege, etc.)
- Superintendent evaluation (process and format)
- Decision-making

Areas suggested for more **comprehensive/long-term professional development** included:

- Team Building
- Leadership development (promising practices, visioning)
- The urban school district (accountability, challenges, area unique to urban districts, reforms, governance)
- Independent Board evaluation/profile
- Cultural competency

Specific organizations which need to be added to the matrix are: International Association for Public Participation, Larson Allen (local management consulting firm with national and international reach) and Personnel Decisions, Inc.

The Board then held an in-depth discussion on sequencing the comprehensive list discussing the pro's and con's of various combinations. It was decided the independent board evaluation was a priority and that the Board would come back to sequencing the remaining areas once that had been put in process. The Board Chair and Vice Chair will look into options and logistics for the evaluation segment and come back to the Board with information/recommendations. This would be provided at the September 4 meeting. It was

noted that it would be important to keep all board members updated as the process moves forward so contributions by members could be made along the way.

It was clarified that outside funding (grant support) would be pursued for funding the Board development.

It was stressed that development was important to ensure a highly functioning board capable of making institutional change and the structural investment to ensure the work carries forward beyond the individual terms of present members. It was noted that it would be important to establish Board development as a core value of what the Board does and to see that it is embedded in the Board's on-going work. To this end discussion was held relative to an annual revisit component to Board development in order to grow as a board, tweak areas in need of address and to bring new members up-to-speed as quickly as possible. It was also noted that professional development is an on-going process with on-going involvement by all board members in its structure and in the decision process.

Board members were reminded that their input on possible vendors is desired.

III. Adjournment

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| <b>MOTION:</b> | <b>Mr. Brodrick moved the meeting adjourn, seconded by Ms. Carroll.</b> |
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| <b>Motion passed.</b> |
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The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Polsfuss  
Assistant Clerk