

# **Special Board Retreat Meeting of the Columbus Public Schools Board of Education**

**Mission:** *"Engaging All Learners to Achieve Success"*

The Special Board Retreat Meeting of the Columbus Public Schools Board of Education started at 5:00 PM on March 09, 2015. The meeting was held at Dusters Restaurant, 2804 13th Street, Columbus, NE 68601

## **Attendance Taken at 5:05 PM:**

### Present Board Members:

Candace Becher

Ken Curry

Alan Dostal

Mike Goos

Francis Kuehler

Theresa Seipel

## **1. Call to Order**

Discussion:

The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m.

## **2. Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call**

## **3. Open Meeting Notice of Posted Law**

## **4. President insures that all can hear proceedings**

## **5. Guiding Principles**

Discussion:

Superintendent Dr. Troy Loeffelholz said the guiding principles must be broad in nature, cover PreK-12 and maybe even beyond, be informative and be written at an eighth grade level. These principles should overlap and not be independent. They should also be the standard and practice for the profession and should be reviewed at a minimum every three years. Dr. Loeffelholz said the board wants to identify behavior that the district wants and also identify behavior the district doesn't want. He said if the guiding principles are strong enough they will lead you away from the negative. These principles should help the district identify their values and lead to transformational planning. Dr. Loeffelholz said when the list is done, a quality check should be completed. The principles should identify the key values, expected behavior and be used in daily operation. Dr. Loeffelholz asked the board if these will be the district's values. He also questioned if there will be a vision and guiding principles or will the guiding principles be the values?

The board was given the task of narrowing down the guiding principles to the top three or four.

The following were the guiding principles, in order of importance, that the board established. 1. Provide a safe nurturing, learning environment,

meeting the needs of all teaches and learners (facilities, social emotional, basic needs, poverty, cultural). 2. Commit to the educational needs of all students as a primary focus of decision making (Special programs, Curricular programs, ELL, Gifted, RTI etc.). 3. Hiring and developing trustworthy and professional advocates of students and the organization (hiring practices and professional development). 4. Operate with integrity, transparency and fiscal responsibility (communication).

## **6. Mission/Vision**

Discussion:

The board will work on the Mission/Vision Wednesday at the board-training meeting. Dr. Loeffelholz said the board seems in consensus that the Mission, "Engaging All Learners to Achieve Success," will stay the same. The vision statements could change. He questioned if there were too many. Dr. Loeffelholz said the vision needs to be simple. He said the board also needs to decide if the guiding principles need to be the same as the district's values.

## **7. Dinner at Dusters Restaurant**

## **8. Strategic Plan Presentations**

Discussion:

Dr. Loeffelholz said the district has been working on the strategic plan for 32 months. He said work began in October 2012. When designing the strategic plan, it should carry the district for at least five years, but it should be revisited every year.

Academic Strategic Plan The three goals of the plan are: 1. Higher order content knowledge and skills 2. Employability skills 3. College/career pathway. In order to reach these goals, there are key actions steps. These steps include: 1. PLC leaderships increase leadership capacity through PLC Institutes, add PLC leadership academy and establish a funding structure to include teacher leadership stipends. 2. Measuring student learning - determine district wide grading for learning philosophy and guidelines. 3 Measuring student learning develop and refine the formative and summative assessment structure. 4. Analyzing student results.

Some of the needs for the plan are: 1. Explicit instruction the district would like to add instructional coaches, and these people must be well trained. 2. ELL Language Development There is still a need to increase staffing. Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction Amy Romshek said she is worried about the high numbers of ELL students at the middle school and couple of the elementary schools. 3 Awareness. 4. STEM Curriculum Romshek said the high school administration would like to add two more STEM courses next year. This would require adding an additional teacher to this area. 6. COR management. 7. Technology - One area deals with training, another network in all buildings, and another devices. The next step for this area is to add devices at the middle school and elementary level.

Key action steps - Improve student learning by strengthening core instruction; increase PLC leadership capacity; increase English language development instruction with ELL students; adopt and support K-12 STEM curriculum; and increase K-8 access to electronic devices. Romshek said the staff has done a lot of work. She said the committee is at a point where they need to consider the next steps. The cost to hire four full-time instructional coaches /trainers would be \$320,000. To conduct the PLC

leadership academy would cost \$59,000 and to establish PLC leadership teacher stipends would cost \$30,000. To hire two full-time ELL teachers would cost \$116,000. The purchasing of elementary STEM units would cost \$10,000 and to hire a high school STEM teacher, it would cost \$50,000. Romshek said the cost to add devices has not yet been determined.

Social and emotional Strategic Plan There were a wide variety of people on this committee. The objective is adding specific staffing positions to help support programs. Executive Director of Student Services/Special Education said the group would like to see a social worker at each level; counselor at each elementary building; school psychologist; additional middle school counselor; behavioral interventionist at each level; differential training; Culture of Our Kids training; Maslow's hierarchy of needs training; systematic behavioral program; mental health services at school; school adult mentor program; school and home behavioral health specialists; and early childhood center.

Harris said his group narrowed down the list to the following top needs: additional school counselors at every level, additional social workers, additional school psychologist; Positive Behavior Support Plan K-12 (cost \$328,965 with each position being \$65,793); PreK-12 PBIS program (Cost \$70,000 for program and behavior consultants at a cost of \$65,793 X 3 for a total of \$197,379). Harris said the behavior consultants would need to be someone with a behavior specialty area. Other top areas include: an early childhood coordinator/administrator, additional early childhood teachers, and facility at a cost TBD. Harris said he will submit a preschool grant for West Park next year. The room will be in the current music room, and the music teacher will move out to the portable and share space with the newcomers program. Harris said they thought about putting the preschool in the portable, but there would need to be running water. In addition to helping pay for staffing, the grant also helps cover some start-up costs. Board member Mike Goos questioned if all these additional staff members were needed. He said perhaps some of these jobs could be combined. Goos said he heard that many people were not sure of their jobs because positions overlapped. Harris said when the social workers first started, there were some territorial issues, but these have gotten better. The social worker focuses on the home, and the counselors handle issues inside school. He said there could be some streamlining of services, but additional staff will still be needed. Many of the board members expressed concerns about funding all the requested items. Dr. Loeffelholz reminded the board that this is a five-year plan, and some of these things may never happen. He said if the funding were not there, the district wouldn't do any of these things.

The board also questioned why counselors can't take on some of these duties. Harris said perhaps the counselors need to come and do a presentation to show the board what they do. He said they currently do some lessons in the classroom but would like to do several more, but they don't have the time. Harris said the counselor's job is also to be more proactive versus reactive. Board member Ken Curry said perhaps if certain things are viewed as that important, other items should be removed. Harris said the committee took the approach that this is what is needed for our kids and based the priorities off of that information. Board member Candy Becher said the teachers could maybe help with some of these items. She said if they had smaller class sizes, they perhaps could take care of more of the social emotional issues. Harris said this could happen, but the teachers would need to be trained to deal with these issues.

Romshek stressed these are only a list of suggestions. She said the committees were all aware that these all might not happen. Romshek said the

committees came up with these lists based on what they heard. She said these areas were identified as gaps that are keeping the district from being where it wants to be.

Facility Strategic Plan Executive Director of Business Operations Dave Melick said there is some funding available for the facilities. He said there is currently about \$2.8 million available for projects. The money came from the special building fund, which has money from sales of property, farm rental and the extra amount that was levied. He said the district is also going to be liable for about \$815,000 for Discoverer Addition projects. He said next year there will be funds going into the special building fund, but he is not sure how much will need to be used on the Discoverer property. Melick said the special building fund can be used to supplement the bond fund.

Construction fund Melick said there is currently \$54,231,924 in the construction fund. There will be \$2.8 million paid out for project work and DLR is owed \$1.7 million. He said he estimates there will be \$158,000 in interest. Melick said the hope is that the estimated costs of the new high school come in lower than expected, which will help cover the costs of other things.

Executive director of Building Operations/Technology Leonard Kwapnioski said prior to him taking the job there was no long term planning done on maintenance. In the past, all roof projects were a Ballasted System EPDM. The lining was laid down and the rock put over it. Kwapnioski said these systems are cheaper but don't last long. He said the maintenance staff has been working to fix things for long term. He said one alternative they are looking at is an EPDM fully adhered roof. To do this, the rock would be removed and the adhesive glued down. Kwapnioski said he is trying to get many of these items covered through the maintenance's regular budget, but he will need financial assistance for the bigger projects. Right now they are trying to extend the roof over the north gym for two years, but it is already two years past replacement. There are also some problems with the CHS south hallway, south gym and auditorium. Kwapnioski said this area was not done correctly with the remodel, but none of the people who did the work will take responsibility. Kwapnioski said the biggest problem is there were no replacement plans established and no long term planning done. He said he is challenging the maintenance staff to come up with ways to try and correct many of these problems by using district staff. He said he knows down the road additional equipment will be needed, so perhaps there is a way to buy something better to eliminate having to hire additional people.

Duncan needs to be remodeled for life safety codes. Kwapnioski said there are six things that need to be done in the next three to five years. He said one thing that will be done is to start paving sidewalks and installing another door coming out of dead-end corridor. He said they are going to try to do this work internally to cut down on the expenses. There also needs to be another exit out of the gym.

Kwapnioski said the building needs to be brought up to code. He said there are also several issues that were put off at the middle school because it was unclear what would be done to the building. Kwapnioski said he is trying to be as cost effective as he can. Some of the board members wanted to know how much Boys Town pays in rent for Duncan. The Duncan rental brings in \$3,000 a month. Dostal suggested doing a lease to own option with them so they can purchase the building. Many board members questioned why the district keeps putting money into Duncan and suggested the building should be sold.

Dr. Loeffelholz said the board will need to prioritize things people identified as needs when determining what to fund. He said there may be some

things on list that may never happen because needs may change or there is no money.

**9. Break**

**10. Strategic Plan Priorities/Recommendation**

Discussion:  
The board did not get to this agenda item.

**11. Board Discussion**

Discussion:  
The board did not get to this agenda item.

**12. Adjourn**

**Order #15-77 - Motion Passed:** Motion to Adjourn the meeting at 8:58. passed with a motion by Alan Dostal and a second by Theresa Seipel.

Candace Becher	Yes
Ken Curry	Yes
Alan Dostal	Yes
Mike Goos	Yes
Francis Kuehler	Yes
Theresa Seipel	Yes

I, the undersigned, being the duly qualified Secretary for the School District No. 1 of Columbus, Nebraska, certify that the preceding is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular School Board meeting of March 09, 2015.

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President

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Secretary