

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SALT LAKE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Study Session  
and Closed Executive Session

May 17, 2016

The Board of Education of Salt Lake City School District met in a Board Study Session and Closed Executive Session at 6:15 p.m. on Tuesday, May 17, 2016, in the Board Room of the Administration Building, 440 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, Utah.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: President Heather Bennett, Vice President Tiffany Sandberg, J. Michael Clára, Rosemary Emery, Melissa Ford, Katherine Kennedy, Kristi Swett, and Cristian Cortes, Student Member.

Also Present: McKell Withers, Superintendent; Janet Roberts, Business Administrator; Kathleen Christy, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Equity and Advocacy; Kristina Kindl, Director of Policy and Legal Services; Barbara Kuehl, Chief Academic Officer, Brian Conley, Chief School Improvement Officer; Larry Madden, Chief Operations Officer; Craig Ruesch, Interim Executive Director of Human Resources; Julie Atwood, Director of Educational Technology and Elementary School Leadership Support; Elementary School Leadership Support Directors James Martin, Rebecca Pittam, and Joann Price; Susan McFarland, representing the Salt Lake Education Association; Janet Clark, representing the Child Nutrition Employees Association; Cindy Mills, representing the Salt Lake Educational Office Personnel Association; Jason Olsen, Public Information Officer; Lisa Alleman, Superintendent's Office, and others in the audience.

In accordance with the agenda prepared for the Board Study Session of May 17, 2016, four motions were made. Items are reported as listed in the agenda and not necessarily in the order they were considered.

The meeting was called to order by President Bennett, who presided.

1. BOARD CONVENES

- The meeting was called to order by President Bennett, who presided.

2. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Litigation, Negotiations, and/or Property

At 6:15 p.m. a motion was made, after which members excused the audience and remained in the board room:

<sup>A</sup>(1) That the board meet in Closed Executive Session to consider litigation, negotiations, and/or property. Approval was given to the motion on a vote of 6 to 0 with Ms. Ford absent at the time of the vote.

\*\* (Sandberg and Kennedy)

Present for Closed Session for litigation, negotiations, and/or property were Heather Bennett, Tiffany Sandberg, J. Michael Clára, Rosemary Emery, Melissa Ford (arriving at 6:25 p.m), Katherine Kennedy, Kristi Swett, McKell Withers, Janet Roberts, Kristina Kindl, and Florence Vincent, board legal counsel from Prince, Yeates and Geldzahler.

VOTE RECORD	AYE	NAY	ABSENT
BENNETT	X		
CLÁRA	1,2	3,4	
EMERY	X		
FORD	2,3,4		1
KENNEDY	X		
SANDBERG	X		
SWETT	X		
A Absent	Ab Abstention	F Failed	
N "No" Vote	NA No Action	T Tabled	
W Withdrawn	*Unanimous Approval		
**Members Making Motion			

Board members adjourned from the Closed Executive Session for litigation, negotiations, and/or property at 6:30 p.m.

B. Character, Professional Competence, or Physical or Mental Health of an Individual; and/or Deployment of Security Personnel, Devices, or Systems

There was no Closed Session for character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual; and/or deployment of security personnel, devices, or systems.

3. BOARD STUDY SESSION

- President Bennett welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- Cristian Cortes led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.
- President Bennett recognized Cristian Cortes for his service as Student Board Member for the 2015-2016 school year, and presented him with a plaque.

A. CONSENT AGENDA

<sup>\*</sup>(2) A motion was made that the board approve two of the four items included in the Consent Agenda. These items are listed below. Item #1, Purchasing Report; and item #2, Human Resource Report, were moved to the Action Agenda.

\*\* (Sandberg and Swett)

1. The Purchasing Report dated May 17, 2016, included a breakdown of items costing over and under \$50,000. *This item was moved to the Action Agenda.*

2. The Human Resource Report, included new contract employment for five employees, and changes for ten. *This item was moved to the Action Agenda.*
3. 2016-2017 School LAND Trust Plans.
4. Horizonte/Highland Monument Valley Trip Request for students to travel to Monument Valley, Utah, May 24-28, to engage students in educational and cultural experiences, and participate in a service activity.

B. STUDY TOPICS

1. 2016-2017 School Improvement Plans. Brian Conley, Larry Madden, Rebecca Pittam, Julie Atwood, Joann Price, and James Martin presented updates on the 2016 -2017 School Improvement Plans.

Mr. Conley thanked the board for reviewing the School Improvement Plans (SIP). He said some of the links online weren't working and his department is working to fix the problem. He provided copies of the plans for anyone who wasn't able to access them.

Board members discussed spending LAND Trust money on paraprofessionals, programs, technology, and other items. They said it is difficult to hire paraprofessionals because of salary limitations, and noted once money is spent on people instead of programs, it is difficult to change later.

Board members discussed an information gap on the SIPs with the School Leadership Support Team. Since this year's data isn't available yet, and schools are building their plans based on last year's data, board members asked if the SIP could include goals and achievements for multiple past years instead of just one in order to see trends and identify areas where schools are exceeding their goals.

Mr. Conley said it might be possible to include the action steps next to the goals to help identify which steps should be repeated. He said when the current year's data becomes available in the fall, schools are able to revise their plans. He said some schools make small adjustments if needed, but the new data doesn't generally result in major changes to the plan.

Mr. Conley said one goal his team has set for the next few months is looking into creating 90-day plans. He said it is too late in the process to change for this year, but they are looking at making improvements in the future. He noted the plans also need to coordinate with state requirements. He said they will work on providing three years of data for the plans, and a way to spot trends in spending.

Board members asked if they could provide fundraising data from schools including information about what the funds will be used for, to see if the board could assist with some of the items. They asked for data on all fundraising including PTA and IB/ELP.

Superintendent Withers expressed appreciation to the group for their hard work.

2. 2016-2017 District Budget Development. Ms. Roberts thanked board members for reviewing the budget and asking questions. She said the Budget Hearing will be held at the Board Business Meeting on June 7, 2016. She also said the district has requested the date of August 2, 2016 to hold a Truth in Taxation hearing. Salt Lake County will notify the district when a date has been finalized.

Ms. Roberts said the budget is based on our best estimates. She said nothing is set in stone which is why the board approves a revised current year budget as well. She answered questions from the board regarding the temporary positions of Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operations Officer, and Chief School Improvement Officer and explained approval of the budget will not make those assignments permanent. She also addressed concerns about transportation and bus routes. She said it isn't a topic that impedes the approval of the budget since bus routes for next year haven't been determined yet.

Ms. Roberts answered questions from board members regarding \$2.4 million allocated for at-risk funding. She explained State budget cuts over the years have impacted these funds, the district will not receive the full \$2.4 million for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

Superintendent Withers elaborated further about funding cuts in the block grants and explained why the district hasn't recouped the lost funding. Ms. Roberts explained a change in the way "high-risk" is being defined by the State, saying students who have multiple risk factors are not considered to be at higher risk.

Ms. Roberts thanked the board and encouraged them to call if they had additional questions.

C. ACTION AGENDA

1. Purchasing Report.

<sup>N</sup>(3) A motion was made that the board approve the purchasing report. Approval was given to the motion on a vote of 6 to 1 with Mr. Clára voting "No".  
\*\*(Swett and Sandberg)

Mr. Clára expressed concern about a payment to the University of Virginia that appeared on the purchasing report. He said he believed board members were going to receive additional data from the district before approval. Superintendent Withers said information regarding the reconciliation of funds was sent to board members several months ago. Board members confirmed they received the data and said they'd send it to him.

2. Human Resources Report

<sup>N</sup>(4) A motion was made that the board approve the Human Resource Report. Approval was given to the motion on a vote of 6 to 1 with Mr. Clára voting “No”.  
\*\*(Swett and Sandberg)

Mr. Clára expressed concern about which items are listed on the HR report, and said it seems some people and promotions are not listed. Superintendent Withers said two years ago the board went through a process of determining what they wanted to see on the report, and lateral moves or job changes that don't result in a contract change are no longer listed per that discussion.

Board members discussed various employment changes and whether they would appear on the report, as well as changes they would like to see on the report. Some board members said they felt out of the loop and expressed concern that fundamental procedures aren't being followed. Mr. Clára passed out an e-mail from Stanley Ellington, Community Leader, asking for a moratorium on district hiring until the new superintendent is in place. This e-mail, along with the response from Superintendent Withers, has been added to the official minutes.

President Bennett said these concerns are not relevant to this specific agenda item, and asked that the conversation be brought back to the motion. She said this is an important conversation to have, but believes it would be more effective to put it on a future agenda when it can be discussed with the new Superintendent and new Human Resource Executive Director present.

D. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. Miscellaneous Updates

Utah Core Curriculum. Superintendent Withers said debate is continuing at the state level over the Utah Core Curriculum. The Governor has asked the State Board of Education to review the curriculum again. The State Board responded by saying curriculum is reviewed on a continual basis, and doing more on an expedited schedule will take additional resources.

Accountability Measures. Superintendent Withers said some states outperform the rest of the country and are world leaders on test scores. He said the states that outperform others have had accountability measures in place for over ten years. He said it is unfortunate the State Board is considering changing Utah's accountability measures again.

Superintendent Withers answered questions from the board as they discussed ACT, SAT, and SAGE tests. Board members expressed disappointment in the possibility of returning to ACT, saying even ACT has said there are better predictors for college success than the ACT test.

2. Other Items

Superintendent Withers shared news about a donation of \$69,396 from SONIC Drive-in to fund every teacher project in Salt Lake County that is currently on the Donors Choose website.

Mr. Clára asked if the district is conducting principal surveys, and if the data could be shared with the board. Superintendent Withers said the district is conducting evaluations as part of the state evaluation system. He said there are other surveys that relate to school climate and provide stake holders and constituents opportunities to provide feedback. President Bennett said although the data can be discussed by the board once it is available, it is confidential and cannot be discussed in open session. She said blank evaluation forms can be provided to board members so they can see what kind of data is being collected.

E. ADJOURNMENT

The Board Study Session was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

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Janet M. Roberts  
Business Administrator

lba