

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SALT LAKE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Study Session
and Closed Executive Session

November 17, 2015

The Board of Education of Salt Lake City School District met in a Board Study Session and Closed Executive Session at 5:40 pm on Tuesday, November 17, 2015, 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 (leaving at 8:21 p.m.).

Also Present: Superintendent McKell Withers; Janet Roberts, Business Administrator; Kathleen Christy, Assistant Superintendent, Educational Equity and Advocacy; Kristina Kindl, Director of Policy and Legal Services; Craig Ruesch, Interim Executive Director, Human Resources; Barbara Kuehl, Chief Academic Officer; Brian Conley, Chief School Improvement Officer; Larry Madden, Chief Operations Officer; Christine Marriott, Director of Assessment and Evaluation; Michael Williams, Director of Development and External Relations; Kim Knettles, Interim Title I Director/Family and School Collaboration; Principals Frances Battle, Nibley Park School, and Jared Wright, Dilworth Elementary School; Assistant Principal, Sandra Buendia, East High School; Intern Assistant Principal, Paula Espinoza-Wells, Escalante Elementary School; Susan McFarland, President, Salt Lake Education Association; Cindy Mills, representing the Salt Lake Educational Office Personnel Association; Ursula Martinez Olivo, President, Utah AFT SL Fed #4430; Utah Representative Mark Wheatley; James Evans, Utah Republican Party Chair; Jason Olsen, Public Information Officer; Tina Hatch, Business Administration Office; and others in the audience.

In accordance with the agenda prepared for the Board Study Session of November 17, 2015, 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. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Litigation, Negotiations, and/or Property

At 5:40 p.m. a motion was made, after which members excused the audience and remained in the board room:

*(1) That the board meet in Closed Executive Session to consider litigation, negotiations, and/or property.
**(Swett and Sandberg)

Present for Closed Session for litigation, negotiations, and/or property were Heather Bennett, Tiffany Sandberg, J. Michael Clára, Rosemary Emery, Melissa Ford, Katherine Kennedy, Kristi Swett, McKell Withers, Janet Roberts, Kristina Kindl, and Flo Vincent, board legal counsel from Prince, Yeates and Geldzahler.

Board members adjourned from the Closed Executive Session for litigation, negotiations, and/or property at 5:45 p.m.

VOTE RECORD	AYE	NAY	ABSENT
BENNETT	X		
CLÁRA	1,2,3	4	
EMERY	1,2,3	4	
FORD	X		
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			

B. Character, Professional Competence, or Physical or Mental Health of an Individual

At 5:46 p.m. a motion was made:

*(2) That the board meet in Closed Executive Session to consider character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual.
**(Sandberg and Swett)

Present for Closed Session were Heather Bennett, Tiffany Sandberg, J. Michael Clára, Rosemary Emery, Melissa Ford, Katherine Kennedy, Kristi Swett, McKell Withers, and Janet Roberts.

Board members adjourned from the Closed Executive Session for character, professional competence, or physical or mental health of an individual at 6:45 p.m. and returned to the Board Business Meeting at 6:46 p.m.

2. BOARD STUDY SESSION

- President Bennett welcomed everyone to the Board Study Session. She outlined the purpose of the study session, noting it provides the board an opportunity to discuss major issues and important items in a more informal setting. She recognized the presence of Susan McFarland, President, Salt Lake Education Association; Cindy Mills, representing the Salt Lake Educational Office Personnel Association; and many community leaders.
- Jeanetta Williams, President, NAACP Salt Lake City Branch, led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

A. Limited Consent Agenda

*(3) A motion was made that the board approve three of the four items included in the Limited Consent Agenda. These items are listed below. Item #3, the Human Resources Department Report, was moved to the Action Agenda.

** (Kennedy and Ford)

1. The Purchasing Report dated November 17, 2015, included a breakdown of items costing under \$50,000, and increases to existing purchase orders.
2. Open/Closed Designations for 2016-2017 Choice Enrollment.
3. Human Resources Department Report. *This item was moved to the Action Agenda.*
4. New Joint Educator Evaluation Committee Member(s)

B. STUDY TOPICS

1. 2016-2021 Student Achievement Plan. Barbara Kuehl distributed the 2016-2021 Student Achievement Plan (SAP), and led a discussion about the document. She introduced Christine Marriot, Kim Knettles, and Jason Olson, who were present to discuss Essentials of the Plan. She said each Essential Committee submitted an action plan, which Ms. Kuehl compiled into one consistent document. She noted the 'Resources' section of each Essential indicates whether there is a need for additional resources in order to meet their goals. A copy of the SAP has been included in the official minutes.

Ms. Marriott answered questions from board members regarding proficiency goals, links to the Pathway Markers, and Student Assessment of Growth and Excellence (SAGE) scores during the implementation of the new core. She said it would take a few years to reach proficiency, but the district has seen growth and is currently establishing baselines. She noted scores are similar to surrounding districts. She said the district is still working on interim assessments and providing help for teachers as they work toward SAGE proficiency.

Ms. Emery distributed a document from the Utah State Office of Education website, which contained the SAGE and ACT results for district high schools. She voiced concerns over the low proficiency levels, and said she does not feel the goals in the SAP are realistic. A copy of the document has been included in the official minutes.

Ms. Kuehl distributed two examples of graphics for the SAP Essentials. The board discussed the graphics, and determined they would like to see more alternatives when they discuss this topic again. The board discussed the link between the SAP Essentials and the Pathway Markers, noting the Essentials are internal goals in service of the Pathway Markers. The Pathway Markers will be presented to the public, and are focused on student achievement. A copy of the examples has been included in the official minutes.

Ms. Kuehl answered questions and concerns from board members regarding the dual-immersion programs in the schools. She said though the State does encourage dual-immersion programs, and provides some funding, there must be enough support and space to house the programs in order for schools to offer them. She said the current program will expand to middle schools as students who have been participating in elementary reach that level. She noted the programs currently offered in the district are all Spanish, and board members discussed other languages they would like to see considered. Ms. Kuehl will get stakeholder input and continue to investigate other options.

Mr. Olsen discussed the Communications and Community Engagement Essential. He noted the goals have not changed significantly from past goals, and said Communications is a very personal thing for parents in the district who want information about their students. He said the focus on PowerSchool has been positive. He answered questions regarding social networking and the communication of district events.

Ms. Sandberg discussed the goals in the Early Childhood Essential, and the resources the committee felt would be helpful in retaining teachers. Ms. Christy discussed the goals in the Educational Equity and Advocacy Essential, and the Equity Scorecard. She discussed accountability and communication with the community.

Ms. Knettles discussed the Family & School Collaboration Essential. She noted the resources necessary, and said the open position is currently funded by Title I, and will help coordinate the work at all schools. She talked about the School Collaboration Specialists who work to meet the needs of school communities, and act as liaisons between parents and schools. She also outlined counseling resources and the partnership with Valley Mental Health.

2. High School Start Times and Related Issues. Larry Madden led a discussion regarding a suggestion by the American Academy of Pediatrics that high school students would benefit from later school start times. He noted he had met with the Transportation Department to discuss the impact changing start times would have on busing in the district, and said it would have a ripple effect since most buses in the district transport students to two schools each day. Board members voiced concerns for student welfare, student obligations, teacher contract hours, and the impact on class time for student athletes.

Ms. Kennedy, Ms. Ford, and Ms. Swett agreed to work on a committee to study the impact of changing high school start times. President Bennett asked Mr. Madden to work with the schools to communicate the concerns about start times to the school communities, and to gather stakeholder input. She also asked Ms. Roberts to provide information on the financial impact changing schedules would have on the Transportation Department budget.

C. DISCUSSION AGENDA

1. District Organizational Structure. President Bennett asked Superintendent Withers to explain the reasoning behind the reorganization of the district administrative structure. Superintendent Withers explained with the imminent retirement of Associate Superintendent Patrick Garcia, the announced retirement of Assistant Superintendent Kathleen Christy, and his announcement he would be retiring at the end of the school year, there was a need to prepare for a transition that would provide stability, while allowing the new superintendent the flexibility to organize as they deem necessary. He met with Dr. Garcia to outline a plan that would provide both, while meeting the needs of the students in the district. He said they felt by placing people who were already working in the areas they are assigned, who would retain their current responsibilities, and divide the work of the Associate Superintendent between those three individuals, the district would be able to transition more smoothly. These individuals would be able to work with Dr. Garcia before his retirement, in order for him to share his knowledge. The positions would be transitional in nature. Superintendent Withers noted direct reports to the superintendent have always been appointed by the superintendent. He said since Ms. Christy has changed her retirement plans in order to remain with the district through the transition, she will also assume some of the responsibilities of the Associate Superintendent position, and will work to coordinate equity efforts through all the district's departments.

Superintendent Withers acknowledged the reorganization document the board had been given, and which had also been distributed at GAM, failed to represent the level of thought and detail that went into the process of reorganization, and accepted responsibility for any issues it caused. He said he met with the Equity Department, SLASA, and Ms. Christy, and was encouraged by the outcome.

Superintendent Withers outlined some highlights of his tenure with the district, including the appointment of Dr. Cosgrove, Ms. Carl, Dr. Garcia, and Ms. Christy, to Associate or Assistant Superintendent positions, promotions of district teachers to administrative positions, and the development of teachers from the group of paraprofessionals who work for the district. He noted the challenges of meeting No Child Left Behind requirements, and said the district was the first in the state to require ESL training for all teachers. He promised the commitment to the community will remain as long as he is here.

President Bennett distributed a letter from herself and Vice President Sandberg regarding superintendent authority, in which the role of the superintendent in reorganizing supervisory staff and appointing administrators is outlined. She shared her concern that the issues with the reorganization could derail the search for a new superintendent. She said she understands the concerns about transparency in the process of reorganization and filling open positions in the district, and nothing matters more than the students and employees of the district. A copy of the letter has been included in the official minutes.

Mr. Clára distributed a letter regarding the Agenda Items Request for November 17, 2015. He said he feels the board needs time to ask questions about the reorganization before it is implemented, and he does not feel Superintendent Withers has the prerogative to make these appointments. He feels the reorganization is not in line with Board Policies I-10, Educational Equity and Advocacy, and G-19, Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Prohibited, or the SLASA Agreement, and the appointees do not reflect the diversity of the district. A copy of the letter has been included in the official minutes.

Board members discussed some concerns over the appointments, as well as support for the reorganization. They clarified they had not requested that the Associate Superintendent position be left vacant until the appointment of a new superintendent. In response to a question about higher salaries for those involved in the reorganization, Ms. Roberts said the salaries of all but one of the individuals were not increased, but they will each receive an administrative stipend in addition to their base salary as compensation for the additional work they have been assigned. The organization chart of the district will not have three new positions, but three positions that have been moved from other areas. The board also clarified the reorganization is a transitional structure, and was not intended to be permanent. They feel strongly helping schools develop equity plans is important, and are anxious to see this work go forward. They also agreed it is important to provide role models for all students, and to improve communications with all stakeholders in the district.

President Bennett thanked Superintendent Withers and the board for the discussion.

D. ACTION AGENDA

1. Any item transferred from the Consent Agenda.

Human Resources Department Report.

^N(4) A motion was made that the board approve the Human Resources Department Report dated November 17, 2015. The motion passed on a vote of 5-2, with Mr. Clára and Ms. Emery voting 'no'.

**(Sandberg and Swett)

E. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1. Miscellaneous Updates:

Legislative Priorities. Superintendent Withers said the Joint Legislative Committee meets tomorrow regarding resources for technology and professional development. He said there are concerns about local control, and he will update the board as he receives information.

Strategic Investments. Superintendent Withers notified the board the district has received more revenue than expected from property tax growth. He suggested the board consider a one-time stipend of \$500 for all contract employees, based on FTE.

Board members asked for written information regarding the revenue for discussion at the December 1, 2015 Board Business Meeting, noting if the stipend were approved at that meeting, employees would receive the money with their payroll on December 15, 2015.

USBA Master Boards Award. Superintendent Withers noted the deadline to apply for the USBA Master Boards Award is December 1, 2015. If board members would like to submit for the award, they can do so online at the USBA site.

2. Other Reports.

House/Senate Joint Committee. Superintendent Withers said there will be a joint meeting of the House and Senate regarding reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. He will update the board as he receives more information.

Following the Superintendent's report, Ms. Emery distributed a copy of a letter written by her in May of 2000. She reiterated her concerns about district resources necessary for Maintenance of Effort for the CTE program, and the impact it has on core courses in the district. She said she feels the district implemented the block schedule to accommodate CTE program enrollment. She feels the students of the district are negatively impacted by the investment of district funds in CTE, and feels the students would benefit from higher allocations in core subjects. A copy of the letter has been included in the official minutes.

F. ADJOURNMENT

The Board Study Session was adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Janet M. Roberts
Business Administrator

tyh

**Salt Lake City School District
Addition to the Minutes of the Board Study Session 11/17/2015**

OFFICIAL EXHIBITS OF BOARD MEETING

Official exhibits provided to the board and made available to the public as part of the meeting agenda can be found [here](#).

ADDITION TO THE MINUTES

The Board of Education of Salt Lake City School District acts by vote of a majority of the board members in an open and public meeting. Statements by individual board members, in or out of board meetings, written, oral or in social media, do not necessarily represent the views of the majority of the board or any other board member. Nevertheless, out of respect to the elected office that each board member holds and consistent with state law and board policy, the board allows its members to attach to board meeting minutes any other information that any member requests. When the board votes to approve minutes, that vote signifies that the minutes are a correct record of what occurred and what was asked to be included in the minutes. It does not signify any individual board member's agreement with the substance of the content.

The following information was distributed in the public meeting of the board, and has been included in the minutes at the request of the board member(s):

Student Achievement Plan 2016-2021	Agenda Item B1
SAGE/ACT Results – distributed by Rosemary Emery	Agenda Item B1
Student Achievement Plan Essential Examples	Agenda Item B1
Memo Regarding Superintendent Authority to Appoint – distributed by President Bennett	Agenda Item C1
Letter Re: Agenda Items Request for November 17 th – Distributed by Michael Clára	Agenda Item C1
Letter dated May 17, 2000 – distributed by Rosemary Emery	Agenda Item E