

Board Retreat (Friday, September 27, 2013)

Generated by Shelley R Shelton on Monday, September 30, 2013

Members present

Michelle Kaufusi, Julie Rash, Vance Checketts, Marsha Judkins, Jim Pettersson, Shannon Poulsen, Steven Staples

Staff membes present

Superintendent Keith Rittel; Asst. Supt. Ray Morgan; Business Administrator Kerry Smith; Exec. Director of Human Resources Melissa Frost; Exec Director of Student Services Gary Wilson; Exec Director of Elementary Education Gaye Gibbs; Exec. Asst. Shelley Shelton

Meeting called to order at 8:08 AM

A. 8:00 a.m. Study Session

2. Roll Call

. 8:00 - 9:00 Dual Immersion Transition

Assistant Superintendent Ray Morgan led the discussion regarding a plan for the dual immersion transition from elementary to secondary schools. Points of discussion included the following:

- There will be both elementary and secondary committees that will work to draft a transition plan for the five elementary schools currently participating in dual immersion. There's a possibility of adding German and adding Spanish dual immersion at Provo Peaks. The Chinese program has not expanded due to the difficulty of getting teachers.
- Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese and French were offered initially based on the world's economic powerhouses. They were instituted by the legislature to prepare students to participate in commerce worldwide.
 - The state office has discouraged having more than one language offered in a dual immersion school.
 - After this year the state is closing funding for additional elementary language immersion for 5 years in order to direct funding to a transition program statewide.
- It was suggested the district look into creating a dual immersion language magnet school.
 - Concerns about a magnet school would include the splitting of families between a magnet school and a traditional elementary school; transportation issues.
 - With a magnet school there would be a concentration of English instruction in neighborhood schools. The cost, should a proposed magnet school be accepted, would be underwritten by the state and would include \$10,000 per school per year with training and a coordinator from the state, as well as curriculum.
- There is a significant concern among faculty members and parents regarding the different dynamic between immersion and non-immersion students, with the perception that dual immersion students are given preferential treatment.

Upon further discussion, the following was determined:

- Board members agreed that additional languages should not added until there is a stronger grasp on how to implement a transition between elementary secondary dual immersion programs.
- The district will conduct a study and make recommendations to the board in early spring.
- The transition committees will evaluate what's happening in the district and around the state, magnet schools, and multiple languages in schools.
- Staff will solicit ideas from teachers and principals about solving both real and perceived imbalances between immersion and non-immersion students, and whether or not to cap dual immersion enrollment.

Information: 6. 10:00 - 11:30 Master Board Training

Research shows that highly effective boards boost student achievement. Local boards of education should be the "up front" leaders of public education. They are charged with the responsibility of creating the conditions within their school districts that will enable students to meet more rigorous knowledge and performance standards. This means boards taking responsibility for results even as they hold others in the school district accountable as well. As a result, boards articulate the educational mission of the district and garner the public support and resources needed to achieve that mission.

For this purpose the 5 Star Master of Boardmanship Award (MBA) has been designed to help and encourage local boards to become highly effective boards of education. There are five areas of achievement to become a 5-star board. Board members will have the opportunity to work on achieving the award as a board or individually throughout the year. Progress will be tracked on the Utah School Board Association (USBA) website.

JoDee Sundberg from USBA led the Board in training for the 2013 Master Boards Award. The five areas of achievement for the award include:

1. Continuous Improvement - Paying attention to the quality of what we do to ensure student achievement
2. Advocacy - School boards should be advocates for public education.
3. Community Engagement / Collaborative Relationships - School boards should foster good relations with stakeholders in the district community. Collaboration occurs when people come together to solve problems or create new and better ways of achieving desired results based on trust and mutual respect.
4. Accountability - Local school boards are held accountable for student performance, fiscal responsibility and commitments made to the state and community.
5. Foundation of Effective Governance - School boards provide the leadership through governance that will create the conditions under which excellent student achievement can be attained. Boards should set the model for excellence.

Board members were directed to the Master Boards Award website to complete requirements for each area of achievement.

. 9:00 - 9:50 Boundary Change Study

Supt. Rittel led the discussion centered around two main issues:

1. Recent school safety risk assessment noted concerns about the Center for Accelerated Studies (CAS) placement, specifically no administrator is present on site in the event of an emergency. The need exists to find a new location for the three classes that comprise the CAS program. The administration's recommendation is to move CAS to Provo Peaks. Following discussion, the board expressed support for the CAS move.
2. Efficiently putting a plan in place to utilize currently empty classrooms (elementary level) throughout the district, with the (hopefully) simultaneous result of putting together a long-term plan removing portables from at least some schools. Some current offices at Provo Peaks will be converted back to classrooms, which is consistent with the plan at the time the school was built. The public needs to feel confident that the district is using the available classroom space as efficiently as possible.
 - o Board members reviewed the available space in each school site.
 - o The business office, through the purchasing department, has been working with firms that would make presentations to the board regarding proposed boundary realignments. A population trend

data report, with historical data provided by the district, and enrollment projections would be included in the presentations.

- The district and city will work together in compiling data for long-term planning.

The question arose about whether the boundary change study is meant to inform the board's decision about the bond. Supt. Rittel indicated the discussion gives the board a strategy for planning for the bond.

Board direction: The board endorsed the district conducting the study with the outside firms.

7. 11:30 - 12:45 Audit Findings & Management Letter

The business office prepares monthly board "soft close" financial statements to report the district financial status. This involves ongoing financial policy compliance reviews, reconciliations, budget variance reporting, training, and many other functions that go into the quality financial reports the board sees every month as well as timely, accurate reporting within the organization. The business office staff also prepares a "hard close" annual financial statement at year end, which is incorporated into the award-winning Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and is reviewed by an external CPA firm.

Hansen, Bradshaw, Malmrose and Erickson has been selected as the District's independent financial auditor to attest to the material correctness of the District financial statements. Upon the Board's direction, Hansen, Bradshaw, Malmrose and Erickson also completed additional agreed upon procedures at the secondary schools throughout the district. The independent audit involved examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, and evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

The independent audit of the financial statements meets requirements according to Utah State Code 51-2 to report on compliance with significant state fiscal laws and was part of a broader, federally mandated "Single Audit" designed to meet the special needs of federal grantor agencies. Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States and the provisions of the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, Audits of States and Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations, which are the authoritative standards governing Single Audit engagements. These standards require the independent auditor to report not only on the fair presentation of the financial statements, but also on the District's internal controls and compliance with legal requirements, with special emphasis on internal controls and legal requirements involving the administration of federal awards.

At the time of the board retreat, no management letter concerns, or items of significant concern, had been brought to the District's attention. The following items were found worthy of bringing to the District's attention but do not rise to the level of management letter concerns:

- A federal energy grant was not accounted for in the proper accounting period.
- The Municipal Building Authority fund has a deficit balance.
- The single audit review has not yet been completed. If additional concerns are encountered, additional items may be reported in the final auditor's report.

The draft CAFR, draft management letter, final secondary school review report, and the draft district responses were reviewed by Stefanie Bryant, Director of Accounting Services and Ed Erickson of Hansen, Bradshaw, Malmrose and Erickson. Time was provided during the presentations for discussion and questions. The high school principals and financial secretaries were present to answer questions regarding the secondary school review.

The Final CAFR and associated audit reports will be presented to the board at the October Board meeting.

9. 1:15 -2:45 University of Virginia School Turnaround Program / Assessment Results / School Grades

Gaye presented an overview of the University of Virginia School Turnaround program. Talking points included:

- UVA Turnaround Focus: Understanding the school turnaround context and the fundamentals of successful turnarounds
- UVA draws upon the most innovative thinking in business and education to address the challenges and

needs of education leaders charged with turning around our nation's lowest-performing schools.

- Recognizing that there is no one formula for turning around a low-performing schools, the UVA Turnaround School Program works with education leaders to identify key issues and develop strategies based on their own school / district's context.

Principals Missy Hamilton (Spring Creek) and Alex Judd (Provo Peaks) gave the board an overview of what the program entailed and how it has impacted their schools.

Utah Comprehensive Accountability System / School Grades

Assistant Superintendent Ray Morgan indicated data from the following assessments would be shared with the Board during the study session (see attached):

- Kindergarten Pre and Post-Test scores including comparisons between schools as well as comparisons between half-day and full-day kindergarten classes
- Scatter plots for CRT tests given in elementary and secondary schools based on preliminary data for English/Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science
- Preliminary Utah Comprehensive Accountability System (UCAS) data for a two-year comparison of academic performance results (proficiency, growth, and totals) by school. These preliminary results will not equate to the School Letter Grades; they are calculated in different ways. He reviewed the ways the points and percentages differ between the two systems. Final UCAS results are scheduled for release on September 30.
- Summary of AP test results by district and school; IB tests results for Provo High

School letter grades were reported along with comparisons of letter grades for Utah County School Districts and other districts in the state that have comparable student populations. Comparisons were made with 3-8 schools and high schools as reported historically for AYP and UCAS purposes.

Final reports of UCAS calculations, ACT results, as well as graduation and dropout rates will be shared with the Board in October.

Mr. Morgan stated he would work to accumulate data to indicate whether or not full day kindergarten students maintain their achievement gains in subsequent years.

Discussion: 10. School Construction Bond Ballot Initiative

The board has been considering many facets of the Facilities Advisory Committee's report and recommendations for a bond to replace aging and repair / maintenance-intensive schools throughout the district. This discussion was an additional opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of a bond amount as well as projects under consideration. As part of the discussion, board members reviewed the following reports and spreadsheets:

- Bond Discussion Review:
 - Information Provided to the Board
 - Recommendations from the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) regarding projects and bond amount
 - Updated information from Provo City's taxation plan for the next several years
 - Exploration of property exchange issues with BYU
 - Most accurate cost estimates for all FAC recommended priority project
 - Development of a solid property inventory listing throughout Provo City School District.
 - Latest Updates:
 - BYU has expressed resistance to a large net monetary exchange in favor of the district regarding the Wasatch-Locust Lane property swap, although they would like the keep the discussions going.
 - Supt. Rittel will meet with BYU representatives to continue the conversation and ask for an offer for the board consider.
 - Some residents / parents in the Wasatch neighborhood are now expressing some reservations about the potential land exchange with BYU. The board received a letter from a neighborhood representative through email.

5. Sunset View Elementary - preliminary estimate \$14,000,000

Staff recommended the board come to an agreement on the timeline for making a decision on the bond, that it be discussed during the October 8 study session with a decision voted on during the following business meeting.

11. Upcoming Calendar Items

B. Adjourn

1. Motion to Adjourn

I move we adjourn the retreat.

Motion by Marsha Judkins, second by Steven Staples.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Aye: Michelle Kaufusi, Julie Rash, Vance Checketts, Marsha Judkins, Jim Pettersson, Shannon Poulsen, Steven Staples

The meeting was adjourned at 4:14 p.m.