

MINUTES  
CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER, ROOM 466  
5100 WEST SAHARA AVENUE, LAS VEGAS, NV 89146

Thursday, December 19, 2013

8:02 a.m.

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Roll Call:    Members Present  
                Carolyn Edwards, President  
                Deanna L. Wright, Vice President  
                Erin Cranor, Clerk  
                Stavan Corbett, Member  
                Chris Garvey, Member  
                Patrice Tew, Member  
                Linda E. Young, Member

Pat Skorkowsky, Superintendent of Schools

Also present were: Mary Ann Peterson, Board Counsel, District Attorney's Office; Carlos McDade, General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel; Kim Wooden, Deputy Superintendent, Educational and Operational Excellence Unit; Jim McIntosh, Chief Financial Officer, Business and Finance Division; Staci Vesnesky, Chief Human Resources Officer, Human Resources Division; Kirsten Searer, Chief of Staff and External Affairs, Office of the Chief of Staff; Mike Barton, Chief Student Achievement Officer, Instruction Unit; Joe Caruso, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Chief of Staff; Joyce Haldeman, Associate Superintendent, Community and Government Relations; Cindy Krohn, Executive Assistant to the Board, Board Office; Elizabeth Carrero, Executive Manager, Office of the Superintendent; Lisa Chrapcynski, Administrative Secretary II, Board Office; Ken Turner, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, Office of the Superintendent; and Stephanie Gatlin, Transcriber/Recording Secretary, Board Office.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Trustee Edwards welcomed Trustee Corbett to his first Board meeting, and she welcomed Jim McIntosh in his new role as CCSD Chief Financial Officer.

**FLAG SALUTE**

Trustee Young led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**BOARD MEMBER ARRIVES**

Trustee Wright arrived at the Board meeting at 8:05 a.m.

## **ADOPT AGENDA**

*Adopt agenda.*

*Motion: Young Second: Garvey Vote: Unanimous*

## **BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATION**

Superintendent Skorkowsky gave a brief update of the work that has been continuing since staff reported on E-1: Vision Statement and E-2: Academic Achievement to the Board. He said work on the work streams is continuing with development of the goals and objectives and tactics for reaching the goals. He said the six work stream committees have been meeting on a regular basis, and a full-day retreat is scheduled to take place on January 24, 2014, and staff would be providing periodic updates as the work continues.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None

## **ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA**

Adoption of Consent Agenda.

### **Public Hearing**

Chris Popek, principal at C. C. Ronnow Elementary School, said he and his staff were assured that with the transfer of EdisonLearning, Inc. to Catapult Learning, their day-to-day operations would not change. He talked about some of the programs and processes that he would like to see continue unchanged.

Lorna James-Cervantes, principal at John S. Park Elementary School, spoke about the school's student achievement level, which she believes is due in part to the partnership the school has had with EdisonLearning, Inc. She asked the Board to continue to support the design of this program and its tools so the school can continue its work with their teachers and their students.

## **AUTHORIZE ASSIGNMENT OF EDUCATION SERVICES AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND EDISONLEARNING, INC.**

Authorization to consent to the assignment of the rights and obligations of EdisonLearning, Inc., set forth in the Education Services Agreement entered into by and between the Clark County School District and EdisonLearning, Inc., on July 1, 2012, to Newton Alliance, which shall be acquired by Catapult Learning, LLC, with no additional impact to the general fund, and for the president of the Board of School Trustees to sign the agreement, as recommended in Reference 4.01.

Superintendent Skorkowsky explained that CCSD was made aware that the portion of EdisonLearning, Inc. that is assigned to CCSD is being sold to Catapult Learning, and that staff has been assured that the only change would be the name of the company on the contract, but all services would remain the same. He said they are simply asking that the name be changed on the contract, not a change in any conditions or terms of the contract.

**ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA** (continued)

Trustee Garvey asked Superintendent Skorkowsky if he had any insight into Catapult Learning's expected role in CCSD.

Superintendent Skorkowsky said the current contract for the seven schools expires on June 30, 2014, and discussions regarding next steps will begin after the winter break. He said at that time, staff will be looking at continuing the contract or a transition plan in the instance that the contract renewal is not approved by the Board.

Trustee Cranor asked for a comparison of all demographically-like schools and not just of handpicked comparison schools.

Trustee Young reiterated that they are just considering the change of the name on the contract to the end of the current contract and then the process would begin for the District to determine which direction it would go in in terms of continuing the contract with Catapult Learning.

Trustee Edwards said when this comes back to the Board, it needs to come back with options so the Board is not forced to do one thing.

Superintendent Skorkowsky said if the District brings a contract forward, there would also be an exit plan.

Trustee Young suggested that staff should have a plan of which direction it wants to go in by February or March before transfer season so people are aware. She agreed that the data and the results of this program should be reviewed and that a transition plan should be developed.

Trustee Garvey requested that the Superintendent monitor the new relationship with Catapult Learning and gather feedback from District staff. She asked about the Evaluate program and said that program needs to be included in the exit plan as well. She asked which schools are included in that program.

Superintendent Skorkowsky said seven schools received the Evaluate Assessment Management Program, and through the contract there are 10 additional schools that could participate in the program as well.

Marsha Irvin, Senior Director of Achievement, EdisonLearning, Inc., said those schools include Dr. C. Owen Roundy, Sunrise Acres, Elizabeth Wilhelm, Doris Hancock, and Kit Carson Elementary Schools.

Trustee Garvey asked that a complete list of those schools be provided to the Board.

Superintendent Skorkowsky said this program was offered to schools as an opt-in and those schools named were the schools that chose to opt in.

### **ADOPT CONSENT AGENDA (continued)**

Trustee Edwards said she wants to be sure that the information and feedback that is collected from principles and parents is done so without any coercion.

*Motion to change the name on the contract as presented in Item 4.01.*

*Motion: Young      Second: Corbett*

Mr. McDade clarified that this is not simply changing the name on the contract but is actually allowing assignment of the contract to a different company.

*Vote on Trustee Young's motion was unanimous.*

### **FISCAL GOVERNANCE REFORM**

Discussion of possible changes to strengthen the fiscal governance structure of the Clark County School District.

Trustee Cranor discussed the Board governing in a way that aligns resources with priorities and how this focus came about for her. She shared the work that she and former Trustee Lorraine Alderman began toward this goal. She thanked the individuals she had conversations with as she gathered information to bring forward the proposed policy language.

Trustee Edwards expressed appreciation for the work that has been done but said she had some concerns. She asked what four priorities the Board selected that Trustee Cranor was referring to as stated in Reference 5.01, page 8 of 18. With regard to the information on page 13 of 18, she said the statement in the third paragraph was more of an assumption than truth. Regarding the information on page 15 of 18, Number 4, she said she was concerned that when Trustee Cranor spoke to other entities about this, she feels it may have been presented as though the Board has already approved or agreed that this work would be done. She said she believes the work that Trustee Cranor and former Trustee Alderman have done is beyond the scope of what the full Board asked them to do or expected them to do.

Trustee Young thanked Trustee Cranor for her work and recognized that Trustees need to reach out and speak to individuals and other entities. She said she does not agree with Policy Governance® because she feels it is restrictive.

Trustee Tew commended Trustee Cranor for engaging with the community in the manner that she did and utilizing those resources by reaching out to those entities and individuals.

### **FISCAL GOVERNANCE REFORM (continued)**

Trustee Cranor said the four priorities she refers to on page 8 of 18 are literacy, engagement, school support, and purpose. She said when she presented this information and spoke to individuals, she always let them know that it was her idea, and that she would be taking information back to the full Board. She explained that the third paragraph on page 13 of 18 is a statement of an objective. She cautioned that because the Board was not able to begin this dialogue as early as she had planned, this reference material was very hastily put together to have some type of background information for discussion at the October 24 Board meeting.

Trustee Garvey agreed with gathering feedback and asking for input from experts in the community. She said she believes this has great potential to reach the level of governance that Trustee Cranor describes.

Trustee Wright expressed gratitude for the work that Trustee Cranor and former Trustee Alderman have done but said she felt the work was premature in that it was not brought to the Board first. She asked Trustee Cranor how she envisioned the Board being more involved in the budget process.

Trustee Cranor said the outcome of this would be clarity; that the Board would know the priorities of the District; that the Board would be sure that the resources were aligned to the priorities; and that any course checking or change of direction of priorities would happen in dialogue.

Trustee Corbett said as an individual that was engaged in the conversation about this concept when he was a state board member, he felt encouraged to know that the outreach and dialogue was happening and to be part of something with the intent of making sure that the product would be what best serves students. He said he did not believe at the time that the Board had agreed to anything, but that it was an outreach and an opportunity for dialogue.

Trustee Cranor suggested that, as another option, the Board could consider allowing these best practices to be developed by the staff in the way Open Book was and then capturing them in policy so they are sustained.

Trustee Edwards suggested that Open Book is driven by policy and came about through policy and conversations by the Board. She said she believed the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) was also driven by policy and Board conversation, though it was staff's idea. She applauded the Superintendent and staff for their work but agreed that the policy can be strengthened.

### **APPROVE BOARD REVIEW OF THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES' GOVERNANCE POLICY EL-5: FINANCIAL PLANNING/BUDGETING**

Approval regarding suggestions for future modifications, additions, language changes, and deletions to EL-5: Financial Planning/Budgeting, as requested in Reference 5.02. By direction of the Board, any changes recommended at this meeting will not be implemented unless adopted by the public policy review process at a regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees.

**APPROVE BOARD REVIEW OF THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES' GOVERNANCE POLICY EL-5: FINANCIAL PLANNING/BUDGETING (continued)**

Trustee Cranor said the Board needs to discuss whether they want to drive these things by policy or whether they want to allow staff to do the work on them and then capture them in policy.

Superintendent Skorkowsky said the District has been moving toward a specific system of accountability, and he is aware that eventually these systems and processes need to be placed in policy so that it continues to ensure the success of the District in the future. He said he understands the necessity of the accountability measures but expressed the need to have what is written in policy be specific enough to give direction while being broad enough to allow for interpretation so he has the ability to get the work done that needs to be done to ensure the District's future success.

Trustee Corbett commented that listening to this dialogue, he sees this as a very healthy and positive discussion to have, and he is excited that this is taking place.

Trustee Young agreed with those comments made by Superintendent Skorkowsky and said this is a positive step. She said she would agree with the Superintendent drafting something based on this information to bring back to the Board for discussion.

Trustee Garvey agreed with Trustee Young's suggestion. She said the Trustees also need to increase their knowledge of fiscal literacy, data literacy, and have some elements built into the monitoring report where those concepts and learned skills are applied and reviewed.

Trustee Edwards said much of this proposed policy language is operational and is very specific and may tie the Superintendent's hands.

Superintendent Skorkowsky expressed appreciation to the Board for having this essential dialogue and for their open communication. He said staff has been working very hard to be more transparent and are making progress in this area every day. He said that with regard to providing the Board with information that then becomes public, he is very aware that he gets one opportunity to "own the message" so he wants to ensure that the information is released in the correct manner and that it is the correct information.

Trustee Cranor said based on this discussion, her intent would be to discard these draft policies and allow the Superintendent to move forward and keep the Board informed so they are conversant enough in the best practices to be able to develop policy.

**Public Hearing**

Stephen Augspurger noted that as the Board supervises only the Superintendent though policy, policy development should be public and transparent.

**APPROVE BOARD REVIEW OF THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES' GOVERNANCE POLICY EL-5: FINANCIAL PLANNING/BUDGETING (continued)**

Trustee Edwards said the contract with the Superintendent has specific language with regard to governance, and she wants to be sure that nothing they bring forward puts the Board in jeopardy with the contract. With regard to the timeline stated by Trustee Cranor, she clarified that if the Board effects a policy change by the end of February, it takes effect at the beginning of the very next fiscal year, which would be 2015.

Trustee Cranor agreed and restated that if the Board did not get the policy done by the end of February, it would not take effect until 2016. She said she thought the Board would begin this work in October, but since that did not happen, she feels the Board does not have time to do this work well before the end of February. She said so much dialogue needs to take place and so much work needs to be done, that having the Superintendent and his fiscal team do the work would be so much more efficient.

Trustee Edwards suggested that the Board may need to decide what they want a report on.

Trustee Corbett agreed with comments made by Superintendent Skorkowsky about owning the message, and he finds that the Board and the Superintendent have that in common and not wanting to limit each other and continuing an ongoing communication.

Trustee Young asked if action needs to be taken on this item

Ms. Peterson said if the Board is not giving instruction to the Superintendent, no action needs to be taken.

Superintendent Skorkowsky said with the discussion had here, he has a clear understanding of the direction he needs to go in.

Trustee Edwards said she would have an expectation that there should be some changes to these policies. She said she believed the work could be done by the end of February, at least on a broad policy level.

Trustee Cranor noted that the current version of EL-5: Financial Planning/Budgeting and EL-6: Financial Condition and Activities will be reported on for the first time this fiscal year, and she said there is broad language in EL-5 on page 2 of 4, but what prompted her to start this project was not subject to monitoring at that time. She said she believes the work that needs to be done to strengthen the policy can be done by Superintendent Skorkowsky and his fiscal team, but the Board needs to be informed and conversant in the best practices and how the best practices are changing outcomes for students.

**APPROVE BOARD REVIEW OF THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES' GOVERNANCE POLICY EL-5: FINANCIAL PLANNING/BUDGETING (continued)**

Superintendent Skorkowsky assured the Board that staff does have extensive community participation in their work on the work streams, and they will also have extensive community groups involved in the vetting of the work they are doing.

No action was taken on this item.

**APPROVE BOARD REVIEW OF THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES' GOVERNANCE POLICY EL-6: FINANCIAL CONDITION AND ACTIVITIES**

Approval regarding suggestions for future modifications, additions, language changes, and deletions to EL-6: Financial Condition and Activities, as requested in Reference 5.03. By direction of the Board, any changes recommended at this meeting will not be implemented unless adopted by the public policy review process at a regular meeting of the Board of School Trustees.

No action was taken on this item.

**AGENDA PLANNING: ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

Trustee Garvey suggested the Board explore professional development for the Board regarding becoming conversant on a higher level in terms of fiscal matters.

**DISCUSSION AND REQUEST FOR SPECIAL MEETINGS**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None.

**ADJOURN:** 10:21 a.m.

*Motion: Corbett    Second: Wright    Unanimous*