

MINUTES
CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
EDWARD A. GREER EDUCATION CENTER, BOARD ROOM
2832 E. FLAMINGO ROAD, LAS VEGAS, NV 89121

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD AND WORK SESSION

Monday, January 07, 2008

9:03 a.m.

Roll Call: Members Present

Ruth L. Johnson, President
Terri Janison, Vice President
Mary Beth Scow, Clerk
Shirley Barber, Member
Sheila Moulton, Member
Carolyn Edwards, Member

Member Absent

Larry P. Mason, Member

Dr. Walt Rulffes, Superintendent of Schools

Also present were: Mary-Anne Miller, Board Counsel, District Attorney's Office; Bill Hoffman, General Counsel, Legal Department; Lauren Kohut-Rost, Deputy Superintendent, Instruction Unit; Joyce Haldeman, Associate Superintendent, Community and Government Relations; Bill Sampson, Director II, Budget Department, Finance and Operations Division; Jim McIntosh, Director, Accounting Department, Finance and Operations Division; Diane Efthimiou, Director, Grants Development and Administration Department, Student Support Services Division; Elizabeth Carrero, Secretary to the Superintendent, Superintendent's Office; Cindy Krohn, Executive Assistant, Board Office; Lisa Chrapcynski, Administrative Secretary II, Board Office; and Stephanie Gatlin, Transcriber/Recording Secretary, Board Office.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mrs. Johnson announced that Mr. Mason was attending the Board of Regents meeting where they are also addressing the Governor's proposed budget cuts.

ADOPT AGENDA

Adopt agenda.

Motion: Edwards Second: Moulton Vote: Unanimous

Mrs. Barber was not present for the vote.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT

K-12 Budget Reductions Proposed By Governor Gibbons – Kevin Donovan, Ralph Cadwallader, and Donna Anspach

Mr. Donovan stated in his opinion, the recent Attendance Zone Advisory Commission (AZAC) proposals seem like a waste of funds in light of the Governor's education budget reductions. He stated he believes the district could do what is being asked by Governor Gibbons by using the tools in policy.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)

Mr. Cadwallader, Executive Director, Nevada Association of School Administrators, spoke about the significant adverse impact the proposed budget cuts would have on education, schools, and individuals. He urged the Board to minimize the impact of cuts on direct instruction; to inform parents of what the State is doing to them and to the district; to remind stakeholders that Nevada, which has continuously underfunded education is now taking another step backwards; to invite the Governor and his staff to recommend what areas should be cut; and to not let this situation be trivialized.

Ms. Anspach, Nevadans For Quality Education (NQE), mentioned the candlelight vigil staged by NQE in opposition of Governor Gibbon's proposed budget cuts. She stated that on Wednesday, January 16, 2008, at 4:30 p.m. at Spring Valley High School NQE will sponsor a town hall meeting. She stated that television show host Jon Ralston would moderate this event.

Mrs. Moulton responded to Mr. Donovan's comments, stating zoning is a very challenging process and stated she appreciated his comments. She thanked Mr. Cadwallader and Ms. Anspach for their comments.

Trustee Edwards asked Ms. Anspach to send her the information regarding the town hall meeting so that she may forward it to her constituents.

Mrs. Scow commented on the challenge of budgeting and zoning for the schools and stated she appreciated the comments made by Mr. Donovan.

Mrs. Janison asked if there was a way to determine the costs of zoning.

Mrs. Johnson clarified that Mrs. Janison was requesting a cost analysis of zoning decisions prior to implementation, and she asked the Superintendent to provide that information to the Board.

APPROVE REPORT OF 2007 BOARD ACTIVITIES

Approval on a review of Board activities that took place in 2007.

Mrs. Johnson briefly described activities, changes, and accomplishments that took place in 2007. Her list included the Officers' Meetings; the installation of BoardDocs, thus savings close to \$55,000 per year; the first steps taken to implement webcasting of Board meetings; changes to governing policies; the Superintendent was found in compliance and making reasonable progress with the following highlights: a 60 percent increase in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), a 20 percent increase in CCSD graduates going on to UNLV, 39 National Merit finalists, and a decrease in the dropout rate and the achievement gap; an appreciation for the Board advisory committees; participation in American Education Week; the opening of 9 new schools and 2 replacement schools; and the implementation of School Matters.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)

Mrs. Johnson recognized Assemblywoman Barbara Buckley.

Assemblywoman Buckley shared with the Board her position on the Governor's proposed budget cuts on education. She stated critical issues are already being faced, such as a shortage of quality teachers, a shortage of textbooks and classroom supplies, and overcrowded classrooms, and the fact that CCSD is 46th in the nation regarding funding per pupil expenditures. She spoke about recent budget increases gained, such as funding for the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Program, funding for vocational and educational programs, funding for innovative programs – the former SB404 program, the expansion of full-day kindergarten, and the appropriation of money for empowerment schools.

PUBLIC SPEAKING/RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT (continued)

Assemblywoman Buckley stated those funding gains will be lost because of these proposed budget cuts. She stated there is a rainy day fund that had been created precisely for situations such as this, and she indicated that this fund should be used instead of cutting funds for education. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak on this issue. She suggested instead, deferring certain maintenance programs for a year. She also pointed out that the funding for the full-day kindergarten expansion and the empowerment schools funding should not be cut because the monies saved from delaying the programs for a year cannot be used to make up for a shortfall in other areas of government.

APPROVE REPORT OF 2007 BOARD ACTIVITIES (continued)

Mrs. Janison, on behalf of the Board and staff, thanked Mrs. Johnson for her work on the Board for the past two years and presented her with a plaque and flowers as a show of appreciation.

TELECONFERENCE CALL CONNECTED

Teleconference call with Mrs. Barber was connected at 9:35 a.m.

APPROVE REPORT OF 2007 BOARD ACTIVITIES (continued)

Mrs. Johnson thanked the Board, especially the officers, for their work on the Board and their help with everything that has been brought before the Board.

APPROVE ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES—PRESIDENT

Approval on the election of the Office of the President.

Mrs. Moulton nominated Mrs. Scow for president of the Board.

Trustee Edwards nominated Mrs. Janison for president of the Board.

Motion to close nominations.

Motion: Moulton Second: Scow Vote: Unanimous

*Vote on Mrs. Scow for president of the Board: Yeses – 4 (Johnson, Scow, Barber, Moulton);
Noes – 2 (Janison, Edwards)*

APPROVE ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES—VICE PRESIDENT

Approval on the election of the Office of the Vice President.

Trustee Edwards nominated Mrs. Janison for vice president of the Board.

Motion to close the nominations.

Motion: Moulton Second: Scow Vote: Unanimous

Vote on Mrs. Janison for vice president of the Board was unanimous.

APPROVE ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES—CLERK

Approval on the election of the Office of the Clerk.

Mrs. Janison nominated Trustee Edwards for clerk of the Board.

APPROVE ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES—CLERK (continued)

Motion to close the nominations.

Motion: Moulton Second: Scow Vote: Unanimous

Vote on Trustee Edwards for clerk of the Board: Yeses – 5 (Johnson, Janison, Scow, Moulton, Edwards); Abstain – 1 (Barber)

RECESS: 9:42 a.m.

RECONVENE: 9:46 a.m.

TELECONFERENCE CALL CONNECTED

Teleconference call with Mrs. Barber was connected at 9:48 a.m.

K-12 BUDGET REDUCTIONS PROPOSED BY GOVERNOR GIBBONS

Presentation and discussion regarding the K-12 budget reductions proposed by Governor Gibbons.

Dr. Rulfes briefly addressed the budget cuts proposed by Governor Gibbons. He stated that the presentation to follow will give some insight into what the 4.5 percent proposed budget cut would mean, and the presentation will include a draft resolution for the Board's consideration to present to the Governor's office that would represent the Board's position. He said also included in the presentation is the information that the State is discussing with Superintendents and information regarding the reduction in the Distributive School Account (DSA) funding due to enrollment coming in at less than projected.

Mr. Sampson and Mr. McIntosh presented to the Board the impact, both short-term and long-term, the budget cuts would have on the district.

Mrs. Johnson asked what caused these proposed budget cuts to occur.

Mr. McIntosh stated that the sales taxes are not coming in as projected, and the Governor had determined that there is a hole in the overall State budget.

Mrs. Johnson asked if this situation is something that the district should expect every two years.

Mr. McIntosh offered that the largest component has been the recent housing market.

Mrs. Moulton asked if the State's projections are overseen.

Mr. McIntosh stated the Governor is required to use the projections developed by the economic forum.

TELECONFERENCE CALL DISCONNECTED

Teleconference call with Mrs. Barber was disconnected at 10:08 a.m.

K-12 BUDGET REDUCTIONS PROPOSED BY GOVERNOR GIBBONS (continued)

Mrs. Moulton asked for clarification of the issue broached by Assemblywoman Buckley concerning the non-reversion of the full-day kindergarten and empowerment schools funds.

Mr. McIntosh stated none of the proposed budget cuts have been clarified as of yet, but if those funds could not be used by the Governor, then those funds would probably not be cut.

K-12 BUDGET REDUCTIONS PROPOSED BY GOVERNOR GIBBONS (continued)

Mrs. Moulton suggested that the rainy day fund could be a temporary solution, and it is important to encourage the leadership in the State to advocate for increasing revenues.

Dr. Rulfes stated that the State's tax structure is vulnerable to the economic conditions, and it is because of that sensitivity to the economy the rainy day fund was developed in order to cover the guaranteed support for education, but now the State is not using the rainy day fund to protect education. He also stated he believed the district has already reduced the burden on the State by \$65 million with the enrollment coming in less than projected.

Mrs. Scow commented that the district needs to make sure that the community understands about funds reverting back to the State.

Trustee Edwards stated she believes the Governor is causing CCSD to drop to 50th place in education funding. She asked if this is unspent funding that is proposed to be cut regarding SB 185.

Mr. Sampson stated this number is based on this year and next year's funding.

Mr. McIntosh explained that a portion of the money has already been spent.

Mrs. Efthimiou clarified that SB 185 funds 208 schools, 210 projects, and the majority of 152 support staff positions that have been filled.

Trustee Edwards expressed her disapproval of what is being proposed by the Governor.

Mrs. Janison asked for further clarification with regard to SB 185.

Mrs. Efthimiou explained that \$7 million has been spent, and there is \$12 million left to continue the programs for the rest of the year.

Mrs. Janison asked about the \$6 million for SB 185 Remediation Grants listed in the presentation under 2007-2009 New or Expanded Program Funding.

Mr. Sampson clarified that the \$6 million represents the increase in 2009 from the existing grants from this year so it is an expansion in 2009.

Mrs. Janison clarified that the programs would be safe through this current school year. She asked if the schools would be required to apply for this grant for the 2008-2009 school year.

Mrs. Efthimiou stated the schools would have to submit a new budget.

Mrs. Janison asked if the monies that revert back to the State are addressed when looking at their own budget.

Mrs. Haldeman stated this topic has been approached, but there has been no action taken.

K-12 BUDGET REDUCTIONS PROPOSED BY GOVERNOR GIBBONS (continued)

Trustee Edwards stated there should be a discussion regarding money that had been given to charities and having those unspent funds be returned to the State. She suggested that the reversions should be placed into an account for education so that when there is a shortfall, those funds could be used at that time.

Mr. McIntosh continued with the presentation, addressing possible resolutions.

Mrs. Moulton commented on the lack of communication with the State. She stated she would like to hear from Jeffrey Weiler, CFO, Finance and Operations Division, on those funds that cannot be reverted back to the State as mentioned by Assemblywoman Buckley.

Mr. McIntosh stated the district's intention is to not touch basic support. He said the district would recommend that the State look at enrollment savings specifically.

Dr. Rulfes asked the Board members for any suggestions for revisions they may have and stated this agenda item would be brought back before the Board on Thursday, January 10, 2008, for action.

Mrs. Janison stated she would like to see the suggestion for using the rainy day fund added, and she asked if the items mentioned by Assemblywoman Buckley could be brought to Mr. Weiler's attention before he meets with Andrew Klinger, Budget Director for the State of Nevada.

Dr. Rulfes answered yes.

Mrs. Moulton stated there needs to be a great demand for the stabilization of taxes in Nevada and increasing revenues through tax increases.

Mrs. Johnson expressed appreciation for Mrs. Moulton's quest for stabilization of funding.

APPROVE GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY EL-10

Approval regarding modification, additions, language changes, and deletions to Governance Policy EL-10: Communication and Support to the Board, is requested. 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 board of school trustees' meeting, as recommended in Reference 3.05.

Mrs. Janison offered the following language change to EL-10: Communication and Support to the Board, Number 12: "...thereto and for staff to offer a briefing to the trustees prior to the item being considered by the Board."

Ms. Miller stated the Open Meeting Law (OML), as well as some recent interpretations by the Nevada Supreme Court, allows staff to brief elected officials, which must be different from soliciting for votes.

Trustee Edwards questioned the need for the addition of this language into policy since the trustees can currently request briefings.

Mrs. Janison stated she believed this change in language would strengthen this policy regarding information that the Board receives when making decisions on significant issues.

APPROVE GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BOARD POLICY EL-10 (continued)

Mrs. Moulton asked if staff would "offer" the additional information to Board members.

Mrs. Janison stated the language could be reconsidered and suggested maybe a strengthening of the backup material is what is needed so that the Board would receive the information necessary to make decisions.

Mrs. Moulton stated she was not sure the Board means what is implied by this proposed language.

Dr. Rulffes stated he believes the Superintendent would need to have a structured process in place if this is passed. He offered to direct staff to offer more comprehensive reference material to the Board in order to resolve this issue.

Mrs. Janison stated she would prefer that the backup material be more extensive but that she would agree with a formal structured process being put in place on those more significant items.

Dr. Rulffes offered to make sure that on the more significant items, the Board is provided with more extensive reference materials, and if that does not prove to be adequate, he would then put a structured process in place.

Mrs. Janison agreed with Dr. Rulffes' suggestion.

Mrs. Scow recommended using broader language offered by Ms. Miller.

Mrs. Johnson offered strengthening the language to say that there is an expectation that the Board and the public have adequate reference material on any decisions the Board is asked to make and that briefings be made available. She asked Mrs. Janison to bring adjusted language back to the Board.

Mrs. Moulton stated she would like to see land appraisals included in the reference materials provided to the Board and the public.

RECESS: 10:59 a.m.

RECEONVENE: 11:17 a.m.

STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Presentation regarding the activities of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

Mrs. Haldeman briefly explained that in the MGT audit commissioned by the 2005 legislature, the district was asked to look at strategic planning and put something in place, and the district engaged Dale Erquiaga, President, Get Consensus, as a consultant.

Mr. Erquiaga gave an update on the activities of the district and the Board regarding strategic planning. He conducted a PowerPoint presentation outlining the makeup, activities, and findings of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. His presentation included five general areas of concern: Climate, Achievement, Participation, Personnel, and Facilities and Operations. He also talked about next steps for the Board.

STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE (continued)

Mrs. Johnson asked how those five issues of concern were found.

Mr. Erquiaga explained that he did the scanning, read reports, conducted interviews, went through the public opinion survey, and brought back a list of 80 topics to the steering committee who then created the categories and prioritized issues.

Mrs. Janison asked for clarification of who this tool is to be used by and for next steps.

Mr. Erquiaga explained that this is for the entity and in the next two phases, the trustees and the public would need to participate in the discussions.

Trustee Edwards pointed out that communication and action needs to take place in collaboration with other entities in Clark County. She commented that the list of Strengths and Weaknesses in the presentation is accurate in her opinion.

Mrs. Moulton asked if the five general themes were prioritized.

Mr. Equiaga responded no, they were not.

Mrs. Moulton suggested adding audits and K-12 alignment under Strengths; and tax structure, legislature, and government under Weaknesses.

Mrs. Janison asked what impact it would have directly in the classrooms if the district were to be funded at the national average.

Dr. Ruffes responded that he believed the iNVEST program to be what the Board and Superintendent consider the source of new expenditures should the district get the funds.

Trustee Edwards stated she would like to have class sizes reduced.

Mrs. Janison expressed her appreciation for the work of Mrs. Haldeman and the steering committee.

Mrs. Johnson asked that the Board bring their calendars for review to set a date for a Board retreat at the Thursday, January 10, 2008, Board meeting.

BOARD MEMBER LEAVES

Mrs. Janison left the Board meeting at 11:58 a.m.

STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE (continued)

Mr. Erquiaga addressed the public opinion survey.

Mrs. Moulton asked if the information from this survey was being shared with editorial boards or legislators.

Mrs. Haldeman stated these survey results could be shared with legislators, and that she intends to bring this information forward during the bond campaign.

STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE (continued)

Mr. Erquiaga suggested the Board's next step should be to schedule a clarification phase in February. He offered the following goals for the trustees for their upcoming retreat: Is their vision for the district appropriate to the times? Does their mission align with the current and expected environment? Remind the district of their shared values and guiding principles. He suggested that the Board should include their existing advisory groups in their retreat setting in this phase. He clarified the next steps as follows: a meeting with advisory groups in February; a follow-up meeting and report based on the information gathered at the first meeting; a third meeting in March in order to set goals and objectives; and at the end the Superintendent will present to the Board the framework for the strategic plan.

Trustee Edwards suggested having the Student Council Advisory Committee have a presentation and discussion on this topic at their meeting, and perhaps the Board members could take this topic to their advisory groups.

Mrs. Johnson suggested having the students be involved in the first meeting in February.

Mrs. Moulton noted that she felt a community component was missing from this strategic plan.

Mrs. Haldeman stated the third meeting would be where the community would be more heavily involved.

Mrs. Moulton stated the district needs to focus and prioritize its efforts.

Trustee Edwards offered that perhaps the district could focus on reducing class sizes in math and science classes which may, in turn, positively impact proficiency exam pass rates.

Mrs. Johnson suggested that the 2007 report could be handed to Mrs. Haldeman's office for her to create a newsletter article.

Mrs. Moulton asked about the impact on the district with reference to AYP due to the ability to use growth models.

Dr. Kohut-Rost stated Dr. Karlene McCormick-Lee, Associate Superintendent, Superintendent's Schools, is currently working on an analysis.

ADJOURN: 12:26 p.m.

Motion: Edwards Second: Moulton Vote: Unanimous

Mrs. Barber and Mrs. Janison were not present for the vote.